

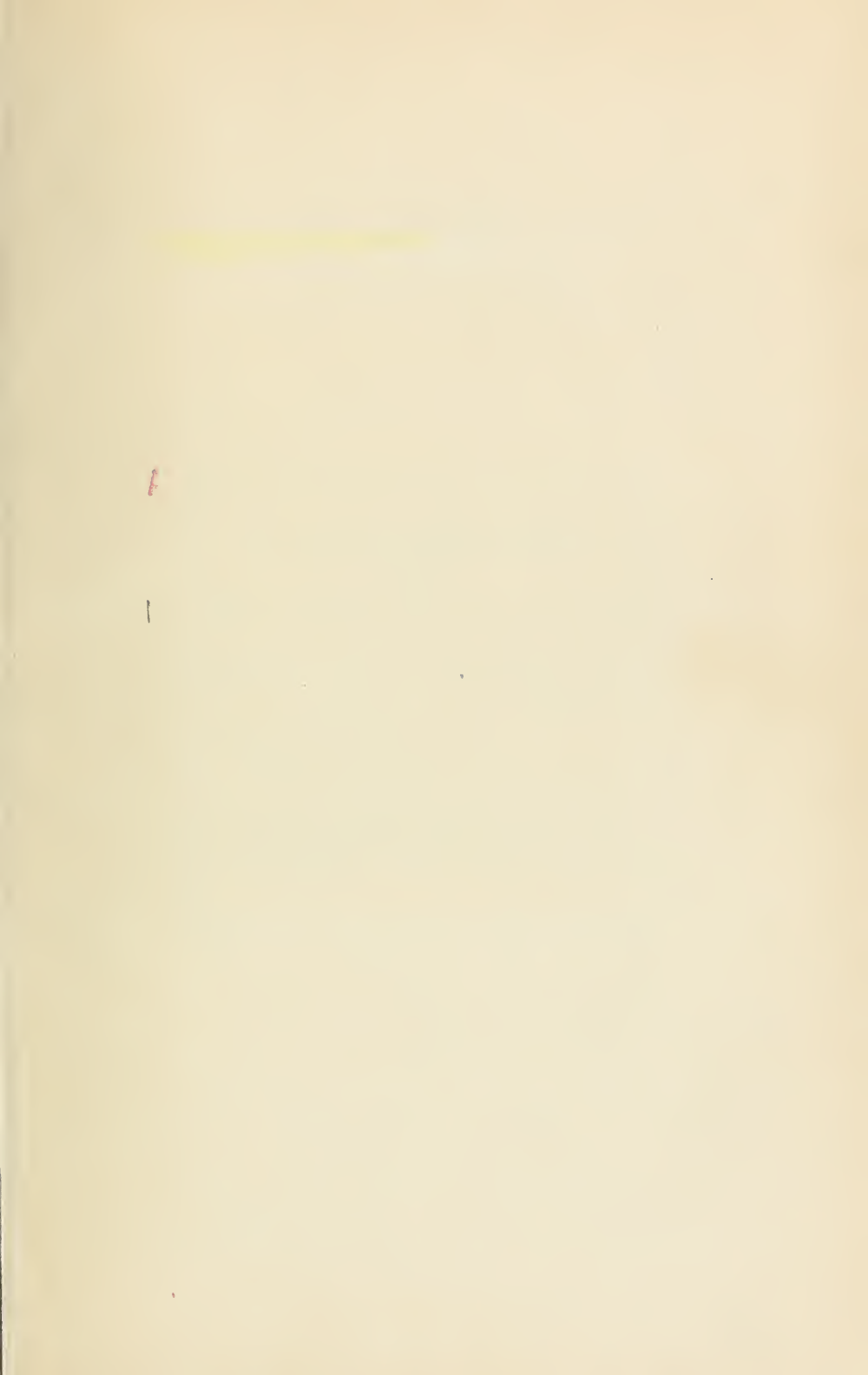
309.12
H55m


Mary McDowell
and
Municipal Housekeeping

THE UNIVERSITY
OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY

309.12
H55m

ILLINOIS HISTORICAL SURVEY 1
17530





Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2012 with funding from
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

MARY MCDOWELL AND MUNICIPAL HOUSEKEEPING

A Symposium

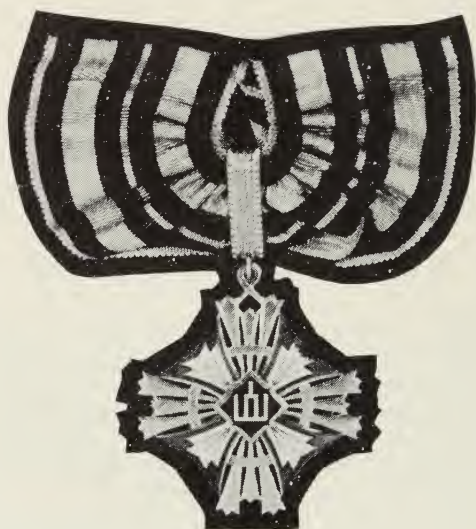
The Young Citizen's Creed

SCD

WE believe that God hath made of one blood all nations of men, and that we are His children, brothers and sisters all. We are citizens of the United States, and believe our Flag stands for self-sacrifice for the good of all the people. We want to be true citizens of this our city, and will show our love for her by our works.

Our City does not ask us to die for her welfare; she asks us to live for her good, and so to live and so to act that her government may be pure, her officers honest, and every home within her boundaries be a place fit to grow the best kind of men and women to rule over her.

MARY E. McDOWELL



Order of the White Lion.



Sincerely
Mary E. McDowell
Sept 1/29.

SPONSORS

Mrs. Carl Beck	Professor Robert M. Lovett
Miss Roberta Burgess	Mrs. John T. Mason
Mr. and Mrs. Henry P. Chandler	Mr. and Mrs. Henry Mead, M.D.
Professor Algernon Coleman	Mrs. Harry A. Millis
Miss Naomi Donnelly	Mrs. Robert E. Park
Mrs. Clayton Eulette	Dr. Herbert E. Phillips
Mrs. Charles Gilkey	Mr. Wilfred Reynolds
Mrs. Wendell E. Green	Rev. Curtis W. Reese
Mrs. Harry Hart	Mr. and Mrs. H. O. Rosenberg
Mrs. Walter F. Heinemann	Mrs. Lee Sturges
Mrs. B. F. Langworthy	Miss Lea Taylor
Mrs. Emile Levy	The Urban League
Mrs. E. L. Lobdell	Mrs. Leila Weinberg
Professor Mary B. Gilson	Mrs. Floyd R. Mechem
Professor Arthur E. Holt	Walter L. Palmer, M.D.

Especial thanks are due to my friend Madeleine Wallin Sikes (Mrs. George C. Sikes) of the Chicago Woman's Club for invaluable textual criticism of every part of the work, and to Mrs. Theodore J. Case, Chairman of the Faculty Newcomers Club of the University Settlement League, for assistance in the art layout; also to Mrs. Harry A. Millis and Mrs. Edson S. Bastin of the University of Chicago Settlement League for help in securing necessary advance subscriptions.

EDITORIAL BOARD:

Mr. Victor Yarros
Mrs. George C. Sikes
Mrs. W. W. Ramsey

H55m. *Ill. Hist. Survey*

MARY MCDOWELL AND MUNICIPAL HOUSEKEEPING

Table of Contents

	Page
COMPILER'S PREFACE	vi
RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE CHICAGO COUNCIL OF SOCIAL AGENCIES	viii
INTRODUCTION By Graham Taylor	x
Chapter	
I. CITY WASTE By Mary McDowell	1
II. THE FOREIGN BORN By Mary McDowell Foreword by Adena Miller Rich	11
III. PREJUDICE By Mary McDowell Foreword by Harriet Vittum	24
IV. OUR PROXIES IN INDUSTRY . . . By Mary McDowell Foreword by Agnes Nestor	39
V. THE STRUGGLE FOR AN AMERICAN STANDARD OF LIVING By Mary McDowell	62
VI. MARY MCDOWELL AND CHICAGO'S "I WILL" IN HOUSING . . . By Elizabeth Hughes	67
VII. CHILD WELFARE By Hasseltine Byrd Taylor	73
VIII. POLITICS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS By Mabel P. Simpson	80
IX. MARY MCDOWELL AND THE COURTS OPERATING WITHIN CHICAGO . . . By Grace E. Benjamin	87
X. THE POLICE AND THE SETTLEMENTS By Victor S. Yarros	95
XI. ILLINOIS WOMEN IN POLITICS . . . By Willa B. Laird	100
XII. AFTER FORTY YEARS By Janet L. Ramsey	107
EPILOGUE:	
MARY MCDOWELL AS WE KNEW HER IN THE YARDS By Harold L. Swift	115
By Herbert E. Phillips	120
WHAT THE "ANGEL OF THE STOCKYARDS" MEANT TO THE CITY OUTSIDE THE YARDS By Caroline M. Hill	127

COMPILER'S PREFACE

OF CHICAGO'S five "Maiden Aunts"--Jane Addams, Julia Lathrop, Mary McDowell, Margaret Haley, and Dr. Cornelia de Bey (so-called by William Hard in Everybody's Magazine in 1906)--the three who were social workers are gone. For each of these, certain memorial writings have already appeared. Jane Addams wrote My Friend, Julia Lathrop; James Weber Linn, Miss Addams' nephew, has written a biography of the one whom he called "the greatest woman of all time"; Mary McDowell has been commemorated by a thesis written by Howard E. Wilson for the University of Chicago in 1928. This thesis, called "Mary McDowell, Neighbor," is of unusual human interest and charm, describing as it does the main lines of her forty years of activity back of the Yards. But of her still more is to be said.

Although Miss McDowell disliked to write, and always preferred talking with her neighbors to "putting them on paper," she did write parts of ten chapters towards an autobiography in the summer of 1927, while in the Julius Rosenwald's cottage at Ravinia. This was done at the earnest solicitation of more than one friend, and was read aloud to a small group, among whom was George Arthur, Executive Secretary of the negro Y.M.C.A., who was enjoying the hospitality of the Rosenwald's at the same time. Mr. Arthur approved the chapter called "Prejudice." When Miss McDowell returned to the Settlement in the fall, she could not be induced to continue writing. Five of her ten incomplete chapters appear in this volume. It is a matter of deep regret that all could not have been included. The chapters on "City Waste," "The Foreign Born," "Prejudice," and "Our Proxies in Industry" are given in her own language; all but the first have introductions by other persons.

Six additional chapters have been written by workers in fields opened since Miss McDowell began work at the University of Chicago Settlement. Some of these writers are younger persons with modern social training and point of view, who have described their specialties, putting Miss McDowell into the picture where she belongs. An article called "The Religious Faith of One Social Worker" appeared in the April number of the Survey in 1928.

The most distinctive of the civic activities which Miss McDowell carried on was that forced upon her by the ten different bad smells which kept her and the members of her household awake at night during the early years; and by the procession of uncovered garbage wagons that passed her windows every day. The chapter on "City Waste," reflecting her views and experiences on this malodorous subject, is the most important in the book. Miss McDowell said that garbage disposal was a symbol of the community's life; and that that life should not be carried on for the benefit of a political party, but for the welfare of human beings. She repeatedly said that women must come to regard their city as their home, and must apply to it the standards of the home, dismissing incompetent public servants by their votes as they would discharge incompetent domestic help. The home must not end with the front doorstep.

Looked at superficially, all that is left of Mary McDowell's work for the sanitary disposal of Chicago's waste is an unused incinerator at 1146 North Branch Street, on Goose Island; another, which was never finished, at 95th Street and Stony Island Avenue; and a reduction plant at 39th and Iron Streets which is now being torn down. To all intents and purposes the city has gone back to the outmoded dump method of waste disposal--just as if Mary McDowell had never lived! If you ask anyone connected with the city Department of Public Works you will probably be told that the garbage is taken away and burned: But if you investigate for yourself you will see that it lies and rots in five different places: 6400 West Grand Avenue; 104th Street and Lake Calumet; 19th Street and Lincoln Avenue; 31st Street and Cicero Avenue; Touhy Street and Central Park Avenue. After the surface of these places is slightly burned over, there remains at the bottom the same mixture of garbage, ashes and tin cans that is characteristic of dumps--a breeding place for flies, mosquitoes, and consequent disease. The dumps, it is true, are somewhat farther away than they were before there was a Garbage Commission and before a modern incinerator had been started. The garbage is taken out in covered trucks instead of uncovered wagons. Infant mortality in any one district is not so directly traceable to flies and mosquitoes as it was back of the Yards in Mary McDowell's time. But the system as a whole is very little different. The Department of Public Works will tell you that there is no money to do any systematic city house-cleaning, or even for any thorough inspection of streets and alleys, and that this is all because people do not pay their taxes. We wonder! The daily papers occasionally come out with such editorials as "An Odorous Farce," or "Behind the Garbage Piles," calling attention to our "barbarically primitive methods"--the result of allowing the city's housekeeping to be done by politicians and labor bosses. But nothing effective is done about it. How long will it be before the scientific method so characteristic of modern life in other respects will be applied to the problems of Municipal Housekeeping--with the intelligence, the energy, and the democratic spirit which were Mary McDowell's gifts to her city?

Graham Taylor, whose forty years at Chicago Commons are pictured in his well-known book, Pioneering on Social Frontiers, has written the introduction to the volume. The epilogue was written by the Vice-Chairman of one of the great industries in the Stock Yards; by a dentist who grew up as one of the Settlement boys; and by the compiler, who has been a resident of the University neighborhood and conversant with the work of the University Settlement for forty years.

It is the purpose of this symposium to leave a brief, readable record of one of Chicago's great citizens, in the hope that others may be inspired to carry on where she has blazed the trail.

C.M.H.

MISS MARY MCDOWELL

Resolution Adopted by the
Chicago Council of Social Agencies
Annual Meeting--January 23, 1937.

WORDS ARE inadequate to express the loss to Chicago, and to social service everywhere, in the death of Mary McDowell on October 14, 1936. Indeed, out of her home at the University of Chicago Settlement, her influence reached across the sea, shaping the course of social service not only in this country, but in countries abroad.

There was a strong rich current in Miss McDowell's leadership, and always a fresh and vibrant point of view. Personal companionship with her, so spontaneously extended, sparkled with humor and quip and anecdote, and glowed with the warmth of her outreaching affection.

Daughter of pioneer ancestors she was--ancestors who helped to open the lanes of steamship navigation on the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers; whose homes were centers of social life in aristocratic circles in various southern cities; champions of free people in Revolutionary days, and of the equality of black and white in the Civil War. Her own early life fed her interest in the welfare of those about her and contributed to the power with which she sought its realization.

Miss McDowell's great service to Chicago began with the city's historic fire. She was seventeen years old when she "hitched the family horse to an old 'Germantown' wagon and helped many refugees to safety with their belongings." Her work led to the formation of the original Relief and Aid Society. She joined Miss Addams at Hull-House, the year after it was founded. At a crisis in civic affairs in Chicago, she led the way in relief toward the transition from private charity to public responsibility when she served as commissioner of public welfare of Chicago, appointed by Mayor William E. Dever in 1923.

Year in and year out, as Head Resident of the University of Chicago Settlement, she campaigned for a modern system of garbage disposal for the City of Chicago. She finally accomplished the doom of Bubbly Creek, "back of the yards."

Miss McDowell was identified with labor problems from the first. In the stockyards strike of 1906, it was she who persuaded the strikers against violence; who helped the women to organize like the men; who went to their employers to negotiate agreements; and who explained to those to whom the social worker's position in the issue was not clear: "Labor needs spokesmen; I think I could do no better than to stay here and do all in my power to make the public understand the human and social side of this industrial dispute."

Miss McDowell was always an eager and sympathetic interpreter for the immigrant groups who were strange to their sordid new surroundings, and later for Negroes when their migration had flowed northward to Chicago; she met problems of race relationships; politics in its effect upon the neighborhood; and at last, questions of peace and international concilia-

tion, sharpened by the World War and peculiarly poignant to an American community which already had become international in fact. She was a leader in the woman suffrage movement when it was new, in the Woman's Trade Union League, and later in the Illinois and the National League of Women Voters, especially as chairman of the department of International Cooperation to Prevent War. In recognition of her friendship for other nations and their peoples, Lithuania responded by presenting to her the decoration of the Order of the Grand Duke Gedeminus. As a refugee, Professor Masaryk had come to see her experiments in social democracy, and his daughter, Alice Masaryk, lived at the University of Chicago Settlement in preparation for the direction of the Ministry of Public Welfare of Czechoslovakia. This young Republic conferred upon Miss McDowell, for distinguished service to its people at home and in Chicago, the Order of the White Lion.

In public affairs, in social and civic work, the memory of Mary E. McDowell will always shine. The Chicago Council of Social Agencies records at this time, a Tribute of deepest gratitude for the life and work of this great fellow citizen.

Written by

Mrs. Kenneth F. Rich
Hull-House



MARY E. MCDOWELL--CITIZEN

By
Graham Taylor
Founder and Head of Chicago Commons for
Forty Years.

WHEN ASKED to state her occupation for a local directory, Miss McDowell's response was "citizen." She might have mentioned any of the occupational positions she had held. Whatever they were she evidently considered them all to be expressions of her all-inclusive calling--citizenship. Making occupations subserve life's calling was the distinction of her distinguished career.

She began to do so, all unconscious of so doing, in the teens of her eighty-two years. She helped her family take under the shelter and care of their home those fleeing for their lives from the flame of the great fire which had burnt them out of house and home. Ever since she has been sharing the heritage of her hospitable and public spirited family even more widely. That is saying much, for the record of the McDowells' reads like the distinguished service lists of church and state. Beyond the folds, their own and others, which their kinsman, Bishop William F. McDowell, served so broadly, she became shepherdess of sheep without a fold, serving the one flock of the one Shepherd. These were lonelier fields than those on which her father served in the Civil War, for she fought for human rights and freedom of fellow men and won victories of peace more permanent if less renowned than those of war.

To take up the arms of love and persuasion, of service and sacrifice, she was moved by her reverence for the sanctity and worth of every human life, which her religion told her was created in the image of God and capable of being restored to that image by grace divine. She bore "the burden of the soul" which her faith enshrined within her heart.

Her training for kindergarten teaching inspired and prepared her to love all children as tenderly as the Madonna when she held the child close in her arms. Long before the public schools opened their kindergartens in tenement house neighborhoods, she sought to serve the neediest little children in the pioneer kindergartens then starting at Northwestern University Settlement and at Hull House.

Then forth she went to better the home for the child, the house for the home, the neighborhood and its health for the family, as the city's service of all its people. On each of these old fields for humanizing effort she found first things to do. At Hull House she rallied and led the mothers to establish its first women's club, the good fellowship of which she shared as long as she lived.

At the call of a group of socially-minded women and men she went to live "back of the yards" that the University of Chicago might open a window through which the first department of Sociology to be established anywhere might let its teach-

ers and students more clearly see the conditions of the common life and the odds against which it was lived.

Health as well as comfort and cleanliness demanded better disposal of the city's waste than throwing it on the "city dump" and draining the stockyards refuse into "Bubbly Creek." Hers was the first lone voice in this city wilderness crying out against this disregard of health and life. She pleaded for more sanitary and scientific ways of safeguarding both. She sought these better methods throughout the homeland and abroad. Thereupon she began to be hailed as the "Angel of the garbage dump." Through two decades of continuous struggle she led the way to the city's incinerating and reduction plants which have made the very breath of life sweeter and more vital, where slaughter had been the dominant asset. Yet in this struggle for decency and public health some few mistook her for "a she devil back of the yards!"

No voice earlier or more continuously than Mary McDowell's rang out in demanding housing to shelter low wage earning families who could not pay rent enough to warrant the commercial investment in dwellings fit for homes. For nearly forty years she heralded this country-wide need to which national, state, and municipal resources only now are being applied at the mandate of a disastrous depression.

Meanwhile through all these forty years Mary McDowell has bravely stood in the breach between employing capital and underpaid labor, between the native and foreign born, between the white and colored races. In order to gain and retain livelihood fit for human life and for a decent standard of family living she claimed the wage workers' right to organize and bargain collectively, without regard to race, color, or previous conditions of servitude. Few if any risked more than Mary McDowell in courageously and helpfully standing for human rights throughout a prolonged strike at the stockyards for better working conditions. None stood more steadily and reasonably than she in the breach pleading for peace and justice through the terrible weeks of race riots on the South Side which broke the peace and imperiled the safety of the whole city.

Recognition of this nobly patriotic stand for equality before the law came to her more from her colored fellow citizens than from any others in the homeland. Foreign governments more than her city, state, and nation recognized her service in protecting their emigrant people. The Czechoslovak Republic conferred upon her the decoration of the "White Lion," and the Lithuanian government bestowed upon her the order of Grand Duke Gedeminus.

This symposium is significant in giving opportunity to those identified with some of the numerous specific interests Mary McDowell served so devotedly and effectively. But none of these specialized interests nor all of them together characterize her life's distinctive keynote. Her biographer could think of nothing more distinctive to add to her name in his title than Neighbor. Such she was to the people among whom she lived back of the years--a real neighbor, welcomed in their homes and welcoming them to the resident household at the University of Chicago Settlement. She fairly created,

The cottagers on Lincoln Street and blocks east and south were buying their homes on monthly payments. These payments depended upon the health of the family and the continuous work of the father, who was able to make less than 21 cents an hour when he had work and on the average he worked about 40 hours per week. The death rate for children of that district was greater than that of the city as a whole and double that of the Lake Shore wards that were innocently sending garbage from their neat back yards to the dumps on Lincoln Street.

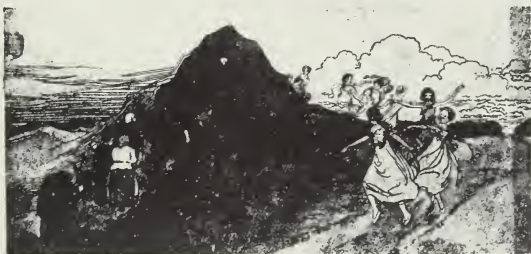
I visited the cottages one August, when babies in the district were dying at the rate of one out of every three born. The Egyptian plague of flies had invaded Lincoln Street. The houses were so black with them that the color of the paint was only seen in small spots. These homes belonged to immigrants who longed for homes of their own. Generally they were country-bred people and wanted a bit of a garden, some chickens and a goose if possible. One of these cottagers who could speak English said to me: "Why they no put this stuff on the Bullyvard? It no stay there long time." Sickness was the great risk that was not insured. Death insurance, which made a "decent funeral" possible, was kept up by weekly payments of a few cents for each member of the family. Sickness meant expense that often stopped payments on the mortgaged home that was being purchased on installments. After the settlement had been established a few years and the community began to know our ways, a Bohemian woman who had her home on Lincoln Street and had become outraged by the conditions asked me if I would go to the City Hall with some of the women householders. They complained not only of the dumps but of the uncovered wagons reeking with filth and flies that every day slowly trailed through the district. We went to the City Hall in 1905 to plead with the new administration. We visited the Commissioner of Health and were sent to the new Commissioner of Public Works. This new Commissioner was an intelligent, college-bred young man who had travelled and had a sentimental regard for the workers. A few weeks later he resigned, creating a sensation by proclaiming himself a Socialist. He told our group of outraged householders and mothers of little children that they could do nothing to change the method of disposal of garbage as they had no appropriation. "You will," he said,



"have to make public opinion that will urge an appropriation from the Committee on Finance of the City Council." He did not know how to make public opinion. I was the only one of the group--mostly immigrant women--who could speak to the motley public of Chicago. I was only an indignant woman close to the situation for which the city was responsible. I knew no one who had any knowledge of a sanitary, scientific method of disposal.

It was not a delectable cause for a woman to embrace, but I remembered John Wesley saying to Christian Ladies: "Fastidiousness, I suppose, has done more than anything else to prevent the coming of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth." So I began telling the unpleasant story of Lincoln Street. I kept it up for twelve years. At first, I fancy I was more or less emotional with a personal feeling of righteous indignation finding expression in my words. In this mood, Mr. A. M. Simons, of the Stockyards Charities, and I spoke on one occasion at the Hyde Park Presbyterian Church. In one of the front pews sat a just judge, who came up after our speeches to say to us: "If you will come to my court tomorrow I will give you an injunction against the Health Department to prevent further dumping of garbage on Lincoln Street. I never knew," he said, "where our refuse was taken; now I know and this injustice must be ended."

We went to his court and received the writ of injunction. At last we had found a citizen who cared and felt his responsibility. The Health Commissioner came in great haste to the settlement, pleading that he had no place in which to dump the garbage and promising that if we did not enjoin him he would disinfect the dump and next year would see to it that no organic matter was put on Lincoln Street. As it was near the time of frost we acceded to his request. The Commissioner, we found, was helpless, and again he urged that we create a public opinion that would permit him to introduce a scientific method for the disposal of Chicago's refuse and rubbish. It was at this time that I learned from a Chicago pioneer that in 1848, or 1849, when "Long John" Wentworth ran for mayor against Mr. William B. Ogden, the issue presented by Mr. Ogden was that of the disposal of the city's garbage. In the campaign discussions Mr. Wentworth had argued that there was no such problem facing the city: "Bah upon your swill," he had said, "A dozen hogs can take care of it all." The cities of the United States had not yet considered the matter scientifically. Some used holes and some hogs. Chicago's citizens, however, were slowly awakening, and in the process of making public opinion Women's Clubs were stirred to appointing city waste committees. An organization of engineers offered assistance that



proved invaluable. About this time the Woman's City Club was organized and it at once tackled this matter as one of immediate importance. I was made chairman of the City Waste Committee and a loyal woman citizen and member of the club with a sense of her civic responsibilities handed me a check and suggested that I go to Europe and study scientific systems of disposal and collecting city waste.

In 1911 I went on this sanitary journey. I had heard many times that Glasgow, Scotland, was supposed to have handled this matter of disposal in the most economical and sanitary way. I went to Glasgow and interviewed the superintendent of the City Cleansing Department who, after generously giving information, urged me to go to Germany, "for they," he said, "came over here and got all that we had tried out and improved upon it to such an extent that now you will find in Hamburg and Frankfurt-on the Main and at Fürth, Bavaria, the best methods known anywhere. We in Glasgow are so satisfied, I am sorry to say, that I cannot get an appropriation sufficient to improve our present methods."

I went to Frankfurt-on-the-Main and found that the fine old Scotch superintendent was right. First I visited the Sewage and Garbage plant on the edge of the city. It was a surprise to find the buildings of good and attractive architecture in the midst of well-planned landscape gardening. Roses were in bloom, vines covered the building, and nowhere were there bad odors or disorderliness about the place. A beautiful high smoke stack carried odors into the air high above the city, leaving only the pleasant odors of roses and hay about us. As we entered the sewage plant our American sense of humor was tickled as we saw on the wall a mural painting of the legend of "The Old Woman's Mill." Old creatures were laboriously climbing the hill to the mill where they were made over into new and attractive young women and then they were seen dancing down the slope on the right hand side of the mill. This was the German way of saying to the public, "Science, like the mill, can take ugly stuff and make it over into that which is useful and beautiful." In the next building we witnessed the process of incinerating all combustible refuse and garbage. The heat from the burning in a high temperature furnace generated electric light for that end of the city of Frankfurt. In the city of Fürth in Bavaria the expense of both disposal and collection was met by the sale of steam for power as well as for electric power and light. The collection was by covered trucks driven by city employees in uniform, quite as impressive as our uniformed officials. When in Frankfurt I asked the Sanitary Engineer, who was a university man and spoke English beautifully, if he thought he could ever hope for a financial return from this process. He bluntly observed that nobody but an American would ask such a question. I answered: "But I want to know, for it is a question that will be put to me in Chicago." "We, of course," he responded, "are economical and may make some money on the concrete building blocks we manufacture from our cinders and clinkers, but, after all, our first consideration must be sanitation and not just economics." I came back to Chicago primed with facts and pictures and took my story to every social group from the esthetic ball room on the North Side to the Chicago Federation of Labor in the center of the city.

The sanitary engineers of Frankfurt as well as other cities in Europe spoke of the richness of our American garbage-- "such waste," "so much grease," they all said--until one began to believe there might be large money returns in the reduction system. Later we learned that the price of grease and fertilizer fluctuated; during the war grease sold for \$11 per ton; after the war it was very cheap. More and more we are learning to be scientific cooks in America and are not offering such rich garbage to the reduction plants as we did formerly.

Our city Waste Committee of women, with a generous press behind it, received from the Municipal Government a sympathetic response but we got no results. The city was hauling to a private reduction company the pure garbage and paying \$47,000 to the company to extract a good clean grease and a useful dry material for fertilizer on which the company made a large profit. This company would no longer deal with the alderman, since their attorney was ridiculed. This is the company that was a nuisance in our neighborhood. It was not so bad as the dumps and was a step towards better methods, but it was very expensive to the city. The city fathers ignorantly urged economy instead of sanitation. Our woman's committee kept on with its carefully planned-out campaign, asking for a commission to study the question. The City Waste Committee of the Woman's City Club for five years had regularly urged upon the Health Committee and the Finance Committee of the City Council the appointment of a commission to study the whole question and report on a city-wide plan for the scientific disposal of garbage and rubbish. They had met with a futile politeness that sorely tried their patience, until in July, 1913 the women of Illinois received the municipal franchise. Then they at once tested their new power by visiting the committees of the City Hall.

The attitude of the private company embarrassed the Health Commissioner. One day an alderman revealed the lack of intelligence of his spoils gang. In a rambling speech before the City Council he burst out with, "I believe in insinuating plants just as Miss McDowell does, but not in the Chicago Reduction Company." The Health Commissioner had for a long time been doing his best to establish a better system of disposal, but certain aldermen were hindering progress because they were playing politics of a low kind. The women who had been studying the problem knew certain important facts such as, for instance, that every day 534 tons of pure garbage must be disposed of and 172 tons of rubbish must be carried from back yards and alleys. It became to them a matter of sanitation, health and esthetics.

The first visit the Woman's Committee made to the City Hall, the week after receiving the vote, brought the same plea for a city-wide plan based upon scientific study. Our breath was taken away to find that our votes were so effective that an appropriation of ten thousand dollars was made in ten minutes and a commission with two women on it was appointed. The next Monday evening the City Council accepted the Finance Committee's report and the City Waste Commission began its work the very next week. Two experienced experts, one who had had experience with the method of incineration and the other with the reduction system, were hired to make the study and report. This report was said to be one of the

best of its kind. Because of the trifling of politicians who cared only for spoils the city was compelled to purchase the private Chicago Reduction Company. This was the same company that had said they could not pay the dividends demanded if they must run their plant up to the sanitary standards set by the Health Department.

The City Waste Commission listed in its report eight different methods of disposing of refuse used in the United States, but the only two that had proved at all satisfactory were incineration and reduction. If in the process of incineration a high temperature furnace is used it is possible to produce steam or electric power for use by the municipality or for sale to manufactories as in Europe. The reduction method was first used in Vienna, but it was not successful until introduced in the United States, where it has been used largely because our garbage is rich in grease. The summer waste in melon rinds, corn cobs and corn husks is a great nuisance to the reduction machinery. The reduction method involves either drying or cooking the garbage to eliminate the water and producing two by-products, grease and tankage. The grease is clean and inoffensive and is used in making candles or soap, and the dry tankage is used for fertilizer.

American garbage differs from European not only in the quantity of grease but also in the amount of water which runs out of it. Seventy-five to 80 per cent of water has to be eliminated in the reduction method, but when mixed with ashes and other refuse it can be burned by incineration and leaves a sanitary clinker available for use as blocks for paving. In our country no satisfactory method has yet been discovered that is both sanitary and economical and not a nuisance to the community.

When one considers that in a large city like Chicago or New York from 500 to 1000 tons of refuse must be cared for daily in a sanitary manner for the sake of the health of the community, surely the best engineering minds should be drafted to find a method that would be satisfactory to both the householder and the city finance department.

Reduction is for large cities, but where the population is 200,000 or less incineration at high temperature is the most sanitary and it would pay for itself if permitted by private companies, or if the municipality would use the excess steam as power to



generate electricity for itself. In England incineration plants are built next to public laundries and bath houses. In Birmingham and Manchester I saw very good types of this arrangement.

The municipalizing of the collection as well as of the disposal of refuse was one of the recommendations made by the City Waste Commission. But as this would do away with ward superintendents and make its collection system an integral part of the disposal system, it did not suit the political game of the spoilsmen. The city owned the wagons and contracted for the horses and drivers. Mayor Harrison had to have democratic horses and drivers; while Mayor Thompson, according to the same party practices, must have Republican horses and drivers.

The average householder has no realization of the importance of the problem of caring for the waste of a city of nearly three million people--150 pounds per person--217,915 tons of garbage every year, or over 500 tons every day. This estimate is based on the 1910 figures by the City Waste Commission of 1913.

The city-wide plan recommended the purchase of the private plant and suggested two incineration plants, one at 95th and Stony Island Avenue, and one on Goose Island. The one at 95th was built as far as the iron structure and a high smoke stack, but there they stand today unfinished, a very expensive symbol of our municipal government's work. The new Republican mayor ignored the recommendations of the former Democratic mayor's administration. Here was neither Sanitary Science nor economy, only party political waste and expense to tax payers.

The municipal reduction plant is no longer a nuisance to the community. The bad odors are cleansed by city water that the private company could not afford to pay for. A new Republican machine has just come into power (1927). Whether a political vote-getter will discard the sanitary manner of running the plant remains yet to be seen.

The important lesson learned by this excursion into the field of city sanitation showed that the municipal government needs trained scientific experts to run the bureau; that there is a great waste of the tax-payers' money in playing into the hands of a national party that has no interest in the city's welfare as long as votes are secured for the party machine.

Another of the "unpleasant things" forgotten by the citizenship as well as by the city government was a nuisance called by the community "Bubbly Creek" because of its habit of bubbling with noxious gases. This creek, once an innocent little stream with willows and wild flowers along its banks, had been turned into a cess pool. For fifty years public indifference had permitted human sewage from over a million population, as well as grease, hair and other noxious ingredients from the many packing houses and stock yards within one square mile (between Ashland Avenue on the west and Halsted Street on the east, Forty-Seventh Street on the south and Bubbly Creek on the north) to pour into this little stream. In its innocent early life it had a flow of water

towards the south fork of the south branch of the Chicago River. The constant flow of sewage into the bed had made it so heavy with filth that it had become the dead end of the south fork of the south branch. When the rain stirred it from the depths, the noxious stuff slowly floated down the Sanitary Canal and left along the banks down to Joliet specimens of its richness that gave our civic consciousness a jolt. Some eloquent tirades against the Trustees of the Sanitary District were heard. The press echoed the outcries and Chicago's indifference was displaced for a period by keen interest. The Sanitary Trustees were urged by Joliet and by the state of Illinois to do something. What to do? This was the question. Engineers proposed diverting the water of Lake Michigan by means of an aqueduct under 39th Street with a water power station on the lake shore to force many gallons of water into the east fork of the south fork as a means of cleansing the filth. This was done at great expense, the people voting a bond issue for that purpose. But this plan failed, partly because the federal government would not permit Chicago to take the necessary amount of water from Lake Michigan and partly because of doubt of the success of the plan.

Nothing was done to reform the dead end of this south fork between Western and Ashland Avenues. Year after year the citizens complained and the head resident of the University Settlement saw each new city administration. She visited the War Department in Washington and it answered: "Unless it is a navigable stream we have no power over it; your health department ought to condemn it." The member of Congress was petitioned. Congress would not bother with so small a matter. A new board of sanitary trustees was elected; again the matter was approached with new zeal and another expensive experiment tried. A connecting sewer was built from Robey Street to the Western Avenue sewer in the hope that Bubbly Creek would flow for once in the right direction. It filled up the connecting sewer so tight with noxious material that it is said to have reached the Western Avenue sewer. Once more the Sanitary Board had wasted the taxpayers' money.

The next board of trustees, urged on by a scientific sanitary engineer, decided to discuss the well-tried-out method of forcing each industry to dispose of its own trade waste. This is the European way. If the United States had begun by studying the Old Country methods, our streams in industrial states would not be polluted nor the fish in them dead or poisoned.

In 1916, when W. H. Thompson was mayor, the voters were asked to vote for a two million dollar bond issue to be used for improving the system of garbage disposal, but voters were given no assurance that the administration would carry out the plan proposed by the Commission on City Waste. The Woman's City Club Committee on City Waste, of which I was chairman, went before the people with the following reasons why they should vote "no" on this bond issue.

1. There had been no sufficient study by a technical staff to insure an economical expenditure of \$2,000,000 on waste disposal.



2. No provision had been made for the purchase and development of refuse collection equipment, nor for the establishment of loading and disposal stations.
3. No assurance had been given of the establishment of a department or Bureau of City Waste to have the responsibility of spending these funds and of operating the plants and equipment for the disposal and collection of the city's waste.

This bond issue was voted down! The Woman's Committee then came out with a program based upon the report of the Waste Commission:

1. We urge that a bureau be created in the city government to control the handling, collection and disposal of all city waste, with a technically trained man at the head.
2. This bureau to have a technical staff to undertake necessary studies and experiments upon which to base plans for the expenditure of the bond issue.
3. That an appropriation of \$450,000 be included in the 1917 budget to provide for the present urgent needs at the reduction plant and to employ a technical staff.
4. That a bond issue to complete the waste disposal and collection service of the city be submitted to the voters in the spring of 1917.

This bond issue was submitted and passed, but no Bureau of City Waste was created and the technical staff was a mere pretense.

Today (1927) the plan offered by the Board of Sanitary Trustees with Mr. Edward J. Kelly Chief Engineer is to compel the great industries, such as the Corn Products Company and the packing plants, to care for the disposal of their respective wastes. The wastes from the packing plants and the stockyards amount to 35,000,000 gallons per day, equal to the population of a million and a half. The solids in this waste will be a heavy load on the diluting system proposed by the sanitary engineers. It will be over 21 per cent of the load imposed upon the system as a whole, and nine times as great as the common run of sewage. The sanitary engineers state in their report that it is only reasonable that industries providing such a large proportion of the foul wastes should bear a large proportion of the cost.

The Sanitary District Report for 1925 states that for a number of years the district has sought to agree with the Stockyards and Packing Industry upon an equitable division of costs. Failing in this and desiring to expedite treatment of wastes, the Sanitary District, February 2, 1924, filed a bill in the District Court of the United States to enjoin the packing interests from discharging their wastes directly or indirectly into the canal system. The legal proceeding in the state courts resulted unfavorably for the Sanitary District.

At the 1927 session of the State Legislature an act was passed which gives to Chicago the right to fill up the creek and acquire the filled ground to be used as a street. The stockyards intercepting sewer, also a part of the diluting system, was built in 1916, along the south bank of Bubbly Creek from Ashland Avenue to Hoyne Avenue, west to the 39th Street conduit. This sewer provided for a new outlet for the Ashland Avenue and Robey Street sewage, including a large part of the sewage of Packingtown from Bubbly Creek west of Ashland Avenue. The cost was \$97,000; in addition the stockyards paid \$25,000. When this sewer was completed the west end of Bubbly Creek was filled up and railroad tracks from the Stockyards Transit System were built across to the large new building used by the government during the war. In 1923-1926 a part of the great diluting system was built in the bed of the stockyards slip, the east end of Bubbly Creek from Halsted Street to Racine Avenue. This made possible the filling in of this slip and the extension of Pershing Road. Our settlement was the first on the field to protest against this open sewer and has perhaps done more than any other agency to awaken public opinion to the disgrace of the ugly and unsanitary stream which was filled up only when the great industries needed the land.



CHICAGO REDUCTION PLANT IN PROCESS OF BEING TORN DOWN

CHAPTER II

THE FOREIGN BORN

Foreword by

Mrs. Kenneth F. Rich, Director,
Immigrants Protective League, Chicago

As the Settlement Watched and Aided in Assimilation

MISS MCDOWELL'S chapter on "The Foreign Born" is an interpretation of newcomers from other lands as a neighbor meets them in a social settlement. Although much of her description applies to the foreign born in any American community, it applies particularly to her own neighborhood about the University of Chicago Settlement. Her understanding of the hopes and capacities, the struggles and difficulties of the foreign born, grows out of her intimate contact with the successive waves of immigrants into the neighborhood of this particular settlement. First came the Irish and Germans; then the Czechoslovak, Russian, Polish and Lithuanian settlers; later the Jugo-Slav peoples; and last of all the Mexicans.

Miss McDowell's conversational portrayal of her neighbors is rich with flavor and anecdote, and as warm and winning as her own personality. In fact, in her expressions of friendly hospitality to these strangers she unconsciously paints a picture of herself as well, a strong and beautiful picture in the history of Chicago.

That in itself is an important reason for the publication of this chapter. It is important at this time also, because it traces with the liveliest appreciation the effect of the impacts upon national life, of the international elements that make up America, and the reciprocal effect upon the immigrants--especially of the second generation--of life under American conditions.

Mary McDowell was a statesman in the adjustments of such conflicts in the lives of her neighbors. She saw clearly the need of preserving for the American born children the heritage of old world culture which the immigrants brought to the New World. "It is well to remember," she wrote, "that culture is a possession that grows best by handing its life roots from one generation to another. If these first generation Americans are cut loose from the culture of their parents, they start their young lives in our country without nourishment for the higher sides of their natures."

Separated Families

The new immigration policy which was ushered in with the Quota Acts of 1921 and 1924 soon resulted in the problem of separated families. Miss McDowell became keenly aware of this problem, especially as it affected some of her own neighbors. Men had come to the United States expecting to found new homes, then to send for their wives and children. In many cases this became impossible. "Our government is cruel without meaning to be," she wrote, "and we believe

that as soon as the individual cases of this cruelty are brought home to members of Congress, they will vote to permit the way to be opened for uniting the divided families."

She did more than express her belief in this solution. She became Chairman of the "Illinois Joint Committee to Secure Legislation to Unite Families Separated by the Restrictive Immigration Act." With the aid of similar agencies in other states, the Congress was persuaded to make a beginning in legislation for the relief of separated families by the "Relatives Act" of 1928, which opened the way for more just treatment of immigrants by the Federal Government.

Deportation Cases

The Immigration Act of 1924 not only set up a wholly new and unfamiliar array of processes in the matter of immigration into the United States, but it set them up in language which in various sections is abstruse or ambiguous. The result has been that certain of the foreign born residents in the United States have found to their dismay, perhaps years after their arrival, that they had not covered all the requirements at the time of their entry; that their residence in this country was therefore technically illegal; and that under the law they were deportable. In the period just following the World War the Department of Labor began to center its efforts upon the expulsion of aliens. In the course of this "deportations delirium" the numbers of persons deported leaped from less than 5,000 a year to 19,865 in 1933, the "all time high." So flagrant became the methods and practices of the Department that President Hoover ordered an investigation of the deportation laws by the "Wickersham Commission on Law Enforcement." Its findings pointed out "tyranny" and "oppression." Recommendations were published which have led to more liberal and humane policies under the present administration of the Department of Labor. Miss McDowell was well aware of the effect of such wholesale deportation upon family life. In the course of a speech which she made in Boston in 1930, at the National Conference of Social Work, on "The Quota Law and the Family," she said:

"It goes against the grain, I am bound to say, for an old time American citizen who is eligible to belong to any or all of the women's patriotic societies, who has great respect for the constitution, to think for one moment of our United States of America as legally contributing to the delinquency of fathers, mothers and children through this breaking up of family life."

Naturalization Problems

At the very beginning of the depression, naturalization fees were by act of the Congress increased from \$5.00 to \$20.00, on the ground that "everything was going up, why not naturalization?" Although the fees were reduced in 1924, they are still twice as high as they were before the depression and still continue to prevent naturalization. The Cable Act establishing "Independent Citizenship for Married Women" has not worked so advantageously as expected. In the course of many years of patch-work legislation, naturalization has become a clumsy, complicated and expensive process. Upon the organization of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturaliza-

tion by the late Colonel Daniel W. MacCormack, many beneficial changes in immigration policy have been initiated by the Department of Labor. In these movements Miss McDowell was keenly interested.

Repatriation to Home Lands

Miss McDowell's chapter on "The Foreign Born" was written well before the depression, which later brought such privation to her neighbors. Their livelihood depended upon employment in the great nearby industries of Chicago. They were well represented in the ranks of labor in the Stock Yards, in the Steel Mills, on the Rail Roads and in many other establishments where the capacity for hard physical work has helped to build the prosperity of this industrial state.

When the depression took away their employment, many of those born abroad found themselves dreaming of the simple homes they had left behind and a longing arose to return to the fatherland. The fields and vineyards of other countries presented an appealing contrast to the bleak and cheerless streets of Chicago. These neighbors began to come to the University of Chicago Settlement, to Hull-House, and to many other centers, begging to be sent "home." They were referred to the Immigrants' Protective League to ascertain whether such repatriation was possible or advisable. With the co-operation of social agencies abroad, the League undertook to make investigations in the home lands of those who sought to go, to determine whether a means of shelter and livelihood did exist, as the prospective emigrant believed.

The Governor's Commission on Unemployment and Relief made available to the Immigrants' Protective League a Repatriation Fund which was used for demonstration purposes. Upon a case-to-case basis, after due investigation abroad, men, women and children in considerable numbers have been assisted to return to their native countries.

Miss McDowell had visited the homelands of various nationalities in her neighborhood and understood their desire to return.

One of the very first repatriation "cases" assisted was a Polish singer from the opera at Warsaw. His funds were exhausted. The expenses of his journey were met by the family which owns one of the largest packing companies in Miss McDowell's neighborhood. The fact that they are patrons of the best music made them sympathetic to the need of this gifted immigrant. Such generosity by a well-to-do neighbor brought as much delight to Miss McDowell as did the well-known kindnesses of the poor to each other.

The distinction which she draws between Americanization and Americanism is useful, especially in these times of economic pressure, when prejudice would fasten the cause of social ills upon the "Ausländer." "The Crusade for 'Americanization,'" she writes, "was born of the World War and was a doctrine of fear. 'Americanism,' on the other hand, is a philosophy, a political and social faith."



THE FOREIGN BORN

By
Mary E. McDowell
(1927)

THE IRISH and German immigrants were the earliest workers in the packing industry. The Irish were unskilled at first but in time they became bosses and the second generation provided managers in the great industries. The Germans knew how to make sausages of various kinds, an honor later shared with the Bohemians, who moved from Blue Island Avenue and Eighteenth Street to the Town of Lake

because they wanted more space for grass, trees and flowers. The Russians, and after them the Austrian Poles, came in about the time I arrived on Gross Avenue. The German Poles were already settled, many owning their homes. Gangs of young Lithuanians arrived, and crowded into the homes of their married countrymen. The Slovaks, Ruthenians, Ukrainians, Croatians, Serbs and Slovenes from what we now call Yugoslavia were also coming. Gradually we noticed that the names on the saloons were changed from Celtic to Slavic. The older citizens--Germans, Irish and a few English--were selling their cottages to later arrivals.

Mrs. Pinko was our one and only Italian Neighbor. She disliked the atmosphere of the yards, and left as soon as she could sell her home. It is only since the war that a large number of Italians came in and some of them were late arrivals. They did not come to work in the yards; the cheaper rents alone brought them into an environment which they disliked. They worked at outdoor work, such as concrete or building, and moved on towards the prairie as soon as they could. There are not enough Italians near us for us to generalize with any degree of accuracy as to national traits, but the Sicilians among us have not led us to believe they are in any way criminally disposed.

During the war the last invasion from the outside was from Mexico. As usual, it was a surprise to find a new group among us. In 1921 and 1922 about five hundred Mexicans of various grades of culture came into the neighborhood. Some were dressed in the latest ready-made clothes, while others wore the sombrero and high boots, like the movie representations of them. The Poles were sure that knives were under their belts or shirts and that the movies proved it.

As in past invasions of other peoples, the settlement opened its doors to the neighbors of the south, believing with Senator



Borah that "God made us neighbors; let Justice make us Friends." One Sunday afternoon our rooms were crowded with these newcomers whom we had invited to meet the consul, Mr. Lupian, a man whom we knew and believed to have the social welfare of the people at heart. We gave them an interpretation of the house, asking them to come to us when in trouble, when out of work, or when sickness visited them. "If you want English for a fiesta, or music, tell us about it," we said. It was a delightful experience to have these gentlemanly Latin Americans, many showing Indian forbears, coming freely in response to our invitation. A club of intelligent young Mexican men was organized as a Cultural Club

This group became our co-operators and very soon our interpreters. They organized the fiestas with music and dancing, and there were always speeches by Mr. Lupian and by some one from the settlement to speak in English. Our story and our pictures were put in the Mexican press and came back to us from Mexico City. We have never had better-mannered guests or such fine appreciation and consideration as our house received from these Mexicans. It is a pity that there were so few families and so few women among them, but lately there has been an increase of this necessary element of civilized life. From time to time there has been friction between the Poles and Mexicans, the feeling being that wages were reduced from 47 to 45 cents an hour because the southern peoples had come in. The children showed the community's feeling of suspicion in their attitude towards our guests. When they saw the large number of Mexicans going into the settlement, they swarmed on the side-walk. In warm weather, the windows would be open on the street and the children would climb up on the window sills to watch the strange party we were giving. They were very curious as to the reason for this sudden invasion of the settlement by people who had been given a bad character in the movies. When they were told that the Mexicans came because they wanted to learn English, some of the young Poles understood at once: "Oh, my mother, she wants English, too." When the Mexicans sang their native songs the audience on the side-walk and in the windows was impressed and remarked, "Why, they sing like everybody else, don't they?" Often such small things change a prejudiced attitude. At first the Polish children scorned the little Mexicans, but when they saw a boy of ten lassoing skillfully he was at once proclaimed a superior, for no boy of his age could do this impressive movie stunt.

The politician very early sees political possibilities in newcomers and seeks out leaders who can round up their countrymen. The "King of the Slovaks," who kept a saloon, or the "Boss of the Poles," who was better educated and could speak English, were soon known to the community. It was a young Lithuanian leader who made the first political breach in the community, heretofore under the tyrannical rule of an Irish Democrat whose "Indians" were a terror to all who tried to be Republicans. This young Lithuanian was the trusted friend of his newly-arrived countrymen, for they had known his father, a farmer of some influence in their old home. They brought to him their savings tied up in old handkerchiefs or stockings. Soon he started a private bank. When he had acquired English and discovered the political game he organized the first Republican club in this stronghold of Democrats. To show Tom Carey that he had power it

may have been considered legitimate in a political preserve that had never heard of political ethics to admit to the club some who had not yet been naturalized. Today this leader has grown so wealthy that he has done what the Irish boss did; he has moved from the field of his exploitation to a grand house in a beautiful suburb. Since this move he is no longer trusted by his simple-minded countrymen in the old neighborhood.

Among these immigrants who had come over to this land of opportunity were numbers of skilled workers who were compelled to go into the unskilled field of labor in the yards. One day I employed a neighbor to do carpenter work for the settlement and he asked whether I wanted "old country work" or "new country work" which was cheaper. Only too soon they caught the "get-rich-quick" methods; of what use was their skill in a specialized industry that asked only that every man be an obedient cog in a great machine and produce the greatest amount of product in the quickest and cheapest manner? Not only did they lose their skill, but they hid away beautiful old-country handiwork, thinking that Americans preferred the products of the department stores. When we gave an exhibit of their handiwork they unearthed embroideries, lace and cross-stitch work that had been kept in trunks. Their children, they said, did not like to see it around. The old-country customs were giving way to the new because the young members of the family objected, being ashamed of their un-American ways.

To the newly-arrived young working people the saloon hall was the center for sociability on Sundays, their one day of leisure. When the saloon hall was no longer open on Sundays, the settlement offered them its gymnasium for Sunday evenings. The first year they danced and sang their old country dances and folk songs. The Polish hop was popular; the folk songs as well as the old music were popular.

In two years all was changed--American shoes, American clothes, American jazz with its saxophone were the rage. The Polish accordion with its folk music, folk dances and folk clothing had been completely displaced by what our young neighbors called "American dances and music." When I urged for the old-country dances I was told haughtily by these modernized young people, as I fancy their old-fashioned parents were told, "Why, Miss McDowell, nobody dances those dances any more." With a superior gesture and a look of 100% American they ordered the saxophone "On with the jazz!"

This type of Americanization by the dance hall and the movies goes on apace. It comes too fast for the good of the young immigrant. It is a comment upon our American culture that these young people cut loose too soon from their parents' old-country culture and traditions and very early adopt a scornful attitude that leads to irreverence and lack of authority in the family. It is well to remember that culture is a possession that grows best by handing its life roots from one generation to another. If these first generation Americans are cut loose from the culture of their parents they start their young lives in our country without nourishment for the higher sides of their natures. One day a Polish woman above the average in our neighborhood, who

had sent her daughter to high school, came to the settlement in great distress, telling of the clash between herself and her young daughter, and weeping because her daughter would not speak to her. When we inquired the cause of this tragic family quarrel she told this story. "I buy a new rug and pay good money for it; it had in the centre the picture of a large dog. When my girl see it she say, 'It is no good, nobody have such rugs now.' She want to take it back to the store, but I want that rug. I pay good money for that rug." It seemed the daughter was as determined as the mother until we sent for this high-school Americanized girl and reasoned with her that the value of a rug, old-fashioned or not, was not equal to the peace of the family or the love of a mother. The old story of the misunderstandings between the new and the old generation is doubly tragic when the new-country daughter has an old-country mother who is to the daughter a "back number." Sometimes the clash comes from the parents, who demand the earnings of the children even after their coming of age. Often it results in the daughter or son leaving home, or running away from the city, or being paroled to the court. One of the vital points to consider is that children born to these foreign peoples in the United States are by that fact made citizens. We should make every effort towards encouraging the children of the foreign born to appreciate the culture of their parents.

The settlement very early offered classes in English, in simple civics and preparation for naturalization, but we did not call that process Americanization. A Lithuanian whose education and culture qualified him for the post was the leader. Assisted by volunteers from among the University students and alumni, he carried on a "School of Citizenship" -- a name that had a dignified appeal to adults who wanted to study and advance themselves. It has been said by those who knew the foreign born that the Lithuanians were the most illiterate as well as the most intelligent of the immigrants coming into Chicago. There were in our neighborhood all shades of culture--illiterates of ability, graduates of schools of various standards, even advanced scholars in the language of their native land. They had been handicapped, as had also the Poles, by the demands of the Russian government that teachers should be of the Greek Orthodox Church, and that Russian, instead of their native tongue, be taught in the schools. For over a century this struggle stubbornly continued. The Russian government prohibited the printing press to these stubborn Lithuanians, but they continued to send over to the German printers their literary productions, for nothing could destroy in these children of the soil that love of music, poetry and discussion. The beautiful women and stalwart men, with their simple grace of manner and their sturdy character, were interesting neighbors and hopeful material for citizenship. The Slovaks under the Magyars were forgotten by their cultured rulers, who used the beautiful Tatra foothills and mountains for their own recreation and pleasure. Here again was the old time struggle to uproot a language of the people. The few schools that existed taught in the tongue of the governing class.

When the Czecho-Slovak Republic included Slovakia with Moravia and Bohemia, they found an illiterate citizenship. In some sections this illiteracy ran as high as 90 per cent. Seventy-five per cent of the population of the new republic

as a whole had virtually no education, while Bohemia and Moravia had one-half of one per cent illiterate. Our Slovak neighbors back of the yards had had no educational opportunities but we found them an honest, responsive group whose children were full of promise. Drinking was their one serious vice, as it was of other illiterates from Poland and Lithuania. The Bohemians love their beer, but were not addicted to Vodka or gin.

When the American hat displaces the traditional headkerchief a psychological change has begun. This is a more far-reaching break with the old-country customs than we understand. The democratic bee is in the American bonnet, and less and less do we see the kerchief indicative of class distinctions except the black silk ones on the heads of women over fifty years of age. The influence of the department store with its ready-made costumes and standards too plays a part in Americanizing the foreign born. A wedding gives a unique picture of this process.

To any outsiders who could have seen Maya's wedding it would have been a revelation of the Americanization process as it operates by means of the stimulation from the every day life all about the foreigner. This wedding was a picturesque incident in spite of very ugly surroundings. The cottage in 45th Street could not hold the guests; they overflowed into the side-walk, bordering the muddy unpaved street with its background of packinghouse chimneys smoking in that disgraceful way and shutting out the blue sky from the view of the gay promenaders. The cottage was purchased by the savings of the mother from her scrubbing. Mrs. Mary Aravska, the mother, was born at the foot of the Carpathians, where beauty feasts the eyes while nature provides as meagre means of earning a living as the Magyars had provided for learning to read or write. The priest of Mary's parish had given her one winter's schooling because, I fancy, she was the most promising of the children and devoted to the church. Today she is a superior person among her neighbors, noted for her noble character and her intelligence. Maya, her only living child, was a beautiful bride in her ready-made costume bought at the corner department store, which was not unlike the costumes of the sisters of the Babbitts on Main Street. Maya was a touch of beauty in the ugly neighborhood as she went from one friend's house to another in her pretty satin gown of cheap material, with her white tulle veil blowing in the breeze. This daughter of an illiterate mother had attended school up to the seventh grade, when she was old enough to go to work in a shop. Her intelligence soon gave her a position that commanded good pay. She dressed well and complained of the ugly street. Now the whole family, for the children's sake, want to sell the cottage and move to a paved street away from the smoke and smell. Maya typifies the first American born generation which early shows a noble discontent with the ugliness and sordidness of its surroundings. America develops an urge towards better material things. At first economic advantages are desired, but the higher desires come later--for education, for more comforts at home, for a higher standard of living. After all, it is the poet who always understands:

"What stops my despair?
This, 'tis not what man does
Which exalts him,

But what man would do."

As I look back I remember the number of younger Poles, Slovaks, Bohemians and Lithuanians who moved towards the better things they saw Americans possess. I know one group of young Polish working men who dreamed of Americanizing a spot in Poland. It was after the war, when the Polish constitution had been accepted and a government of the people was slowly coming into being, that these men met at the settlement to organize a co-operative corporation. They planned to go to Poland to build their own factory and town, using American machinery and their own skilled workmanship in building. "We will put into every house an American bathtub," said they. This vision of Americanizing Poland was never realized, but what a splendid dream for immigrant working men!

The Americans in Cleveland woke up during the war when the neurosis of fear had gripped the United States and said: "We want to know what these foreign people in our midst are thinking and feeling." The Cleveland Foundation made a study of four hundred immigrants who had come to America with the highest hopes. They found that in a large number of cases disillusionment and discontent had begun, by reason of unpleasant experiences with petty officials and bosses of the factories where they worked. It was found that 80 per cent hated their foremen and "straw bosses," who are often men of their own nationality. In neighborly converse, we of the settlement get at the attitude of the men towards social, political and industrial questions. It is interesting to find how they felt towards this "land of the free" before they came over. A young educated Russian Jew of Kief, where he had witnessed a pogrom while he was growing up, told a group of young men who discussed the subject one evening: "If Russia could only have a Lincoln!" in the faith that a man of American Ideals who trusted in the plain people could have saved them from the cruelties they were experiencing.

A Lithuanian student who because of his noble carriage had been dubbed "The Grand Duke" by his fellows of the Michigan college where he had won a scholarship, told us of his sensations when he landed in America and of his real feelings afterwards. When he saw the Statue of Liberty and put his feet on the shores of the United States in New York City, he took off his hat and said in good faith: "At last, now I am an American." He was poor and had to work in a factory, attending night school to learn the language of this country. He told us of his chagrin and bitterness to be told by his teachers that he must be "Americanized." They declared that learning the American language was the beginning of becoming a real American, while he had believed it meant the holding dear of the ideals of Lincoln and Washington. To him, as to many, language was a medium of transmitting ideas, not a test of loyalty or patriotism.

Those were the days when many of us believed that Americanism was a philosophy, a political and social faith. The new crusade for Americanization in a narrow sense was born of the World War, and was a doctrine of fear.

The war hysteria had made the foreign tongue in our midst a dangerous thing. The governor of a nearby state had sent

out an order that no foreign language was to be used over the telephone or in meetings of any kind, or even in the pulpit. A rumor was abroad among the non-English group that English must be the only language used in organizations. The Bohemian women had many societies of all sorts led by women over forty years of age, born in Bohemia or Slovakia, and they naturally preferred at their own meetings to use a language with which they were all familiar.

An urgent message came to me to attend a meeting of representative Bohemian women at their club house on the west side. I found a group of women very much distressed. They had heard that the government of the United States was about to prohibit the use of any foreign tongue by organizations of foreign people. The women present had sold hundreds of dollars worth of War Stamps and hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of Liberty Bonds. They spoke English in their homes; their children had graduated from the public schools and many had gone through high schools and universities.

One self-supporting widow who had educated her children and was then putting one of them through the university was stirred by what seemed to her a great injustice. With a trembling voice and eyes filled with tears, she said in broken English: "Why, Miss McDowell, to take my language from me is to snatch the cradle I was born in from under me." With faith in my government I assured these women, who had shown their loyalty by their works for the country of their choice, that I was certain Washington would never do this cruel thing and that the rumor in question had been circulated by some propagandist.

We had lived with the foreign born, had gone through with them the trying days of the draft, and had no fear of them for we knew how they desired to speak English for their own convenience, but never until the war hysteria overtook us had the speaking of a language become a matter of misunderstanding, a generator of ill-will.

On the contrary, foreign languages proved a medium of a most useful kind during the Liberty Bond campaign. The first appeal was made in English by the Council of National Defense, which insisted that English was the only language to be used. But the non-English speaking citizens had been organized to sell them in the languages of the different peoples. In one factory a group of Lithuanians were adamant to the plea of the 100 per cent Americans who would not permit the use of any language but the American until it was suggested that a speaker be sent to them using the language they understood. At once there was a generous response and great was their surprise at the meaning of the Liberty Bonds. One Lithuanian who for the first time had the words Liberty Bonds translated and interpreted, exclaimed with joy: "Is it like that? I hear of Liberty Sausages, Liberty Saloons, but Liberty Bonds I could not understand," and added: "Tomorrow I bring my money," which he did. When he handed one thousand dollars of his savings he explained: "I give it all for this country, where my daughter she has learned from the American schools more than the biggest man knows in my village at home."

Hundreds of thousands of dollars came from the non-English speaking groups in Chicago as soon as the transmitting me-

dium was understandable. Radicalism is scarce in such a country as ours. Religion is a conservative influence, whether it comes from a Roman, Greek Catholic or Protestant faith. Socialism has some followers, but they are usually "socialistic" only in the sense that they believe in a shorter work day and in legislation that will provide for old age sickness and accident disability. A study made by the Cleveland Foundation showed that of the illiterate only 2½ per cent were radicals and only "100 out of 400 cases were classed as radicals in the sense that they believed in a change of our political organization. One-half of the radical immigrants had apparently reached this state of mind because they were unhappy in their industrial relations.

The organizing of labor, one of the best ways to Americanize, was made difficult in the yards by the differences in language and by the lack of leadership among foreigners. The American Federation of Labor has been slow in seeing the need of trained and trusted foreign speaking organizers. The Irish were still in the movement. During the War, when the Union appealed to the federal government for a shorter work day, better wages and recognition, they were called to Washington by the President. Both packers and men agreed upon Judge Alshuler of Chicago as the arbitrator during the war period. The judge decided in favor of most of the demands that the packers had refused even to discuss with the men. When the decision was made the Stockyards workers were called to an outdoor mass meeting in Davis Square, where never before was a labor organization allowed to meet. It was on a sunny Easter day, in the afternoon, when thousands of Poles and a scattering of all the other workers, women and negroes, Greeks and Turks, all in their Sunday best, a dignified mass of people, were assembled to listen. A warning had been sent out by someone that it might be as well for outsiders to stay away from the park for fear that this mass of foreigners might "do something." I was present and sat with the speakers, where I was able to watch this crowd of workers who had been preparing the food for the armies of the World War. Thirty years before it was the English and Scotch and Irish workers, led by the Knights of Labor, who waged a futile struggle for the right to leisure and lost their cause, the eight-hour day. Today it was Slavic people, Lithuanians, Armenians, Greeks, Turks, Mexicans and Negroes, women as well as men, who showed their belief in their right to leisure and rest.

John Fitzpatrick, President of the Chicago Federation of Labor, addressed these thousands of non-English human beings, who knew him only as their champion and cheered him to the echo. Mr. Fitzpatrick said: "It's a new day, and out in God's sunshine you men and women, black and white, have not only an eight hour day, but you are on a footing of equality. This principle was accepted at Washington by all sides and Mr. J. Ogden Armour said, 'It seems fair to me.'"

It was indeed a new day, a significant day, when by peaceful negotiation the right to be heard, as well as the right to leisure, had been won "by the muscles of the head instead of the muscles of the fists," as one worker put it. The most dramatic moment was when Kukulski, in the Polish language, told this surging mass of the foreign born, non-English speaking workers that it was President Wilson who had called

the leaders of both sides to Washington, and to him honor was due for giving them the eight hour day and granting their other demands. The mass, as if by common impulse, at the hearing of the name of the president, lifted their hats and gave a mighty, long-continued cheer. The Polish leader then asked: "How many of you will put some of your overtime pay into Liberty Bonds? and stand by the President?" The hands of every worker, thousands of them, were lifted high in the sunshine and again, with hats lifted, another mighty cheer rang out. My desire at the moment was to be able to broadcast the scene, the lifted hands and the cheer. Back of it all was a century of struggle and suffering. Here was Americanization of a democratic type that left no bitterness. Here was an intimation of the kind of democracy that will keep our industrial communities safe through the trying times of war or depression.

The Americanization of working conditions and of housing, provision of more space than in the home land, where one or two rooms is often the standard, while the lowest standard for the working class in America is four rooms, is more effective for launching new citizens into our democracy than the teaching of English. The acquiring of the language of the street and the shop is of course of enormous value to both the foreign workers and their fellow workers. More important, however, for the making of good American citizens out of the foreign born is the bringing into their lives of an American environment, an American standard of living.

If we make Ellis Island a model of sanitation and good manners, the beginnings would be less disillusioning to the immigrants. The rudeness of a petty official to a home-sick foreigner is an offense to our country, for he is the first representative of the U. S. government whom the immigrant meets. We Americans remember our own experiences with passports and vise officers in Europe. Their attitudes and manners gave us a favorable or an unfavorable impression of the country we were entering. I know one immigrant woman who longs for the day when she shall have become a naturalized citizen. She will go to Europe, come back as an American citizen and meet on Ellis Island a petty official who made her weep as she entered as an immigrant, frightened and confused; she will speak her mind to him. We must remember that the foreign born member of our community cannot be a dignified member of our social life unless we realize along with him that he brings something we need. "We must not exaggerate our virtues and minimize his," says Miss Grace Abbott in her book The Immigrant and the Community. "We must protect the immigrant against fraud and exploitation so that such traditions as he cherishes will not be lost in his first contact with us: we must give an opportunity to learn the English language and to secure such working knowledge of our laws and institutions as will enable immigrants to join us in the work of making the United States into a really efficient democracy."

If it is true that more than half of our population is foreign born, that 67 per cent of the children in our public schools are of foreign born parentage, then these people are of us and cannot be considered aliens to our best interests as a nation or to the life of our city. We must teach English, but we must also see to it that the workers have time

and opportunities for the study of our language. The way we teach may go far towards creating a desire to be loyal American citizens.

California has a State Commission through which, better than any other state I know of, it meets the problem of recognizing that these people are our people; that their children are our children; that what we do to or for them is for weal or woe to the nation, and that together we must develop it to its highest standard.

At first we were not at all certain of the wisdom of the immigration quota law, but we begin to see that on the whole it is well for the immigrants in our midst. There is no such overcrowding in homes as there was before the law. It seems that the workers have steadier work because there is no large over-supply of labor that keeps wages down. The phase to be criticized is that there are so many members of families that cannot get into the country to be united to their families already here. Our government is cruel without meaning to be so, and we believe that as soon as the individual cases of this cruelty of separation are brought home to members of Congress they will vote to permit the way to be opened for uniting the divided families.

*Children of the University of Chicago
Settlement.*



from the Chicago Daily News, Saturday, November 20, 1936 ...

CHAPTER III

PREJUDICE

Foreword by Harriet E. Vittum
Head Resident, Northwestern University Settlement

MARY E. MCDOWELL, WARRIOR AGAINST PREJUDICE

NEARLY FORTY years of life "back o' the yards," where the melting pot described by Zangwill seemed always at the boiling point, taught Mary McDowell the poison of prejudice and led her into determined, ceaseless effort to build a sympathetic understanding among peoples of different national, racial, cultural and economic backgrounds. Feeling keenly that even among the most different types of people there are many more points at which they feel alike and are alike than there are points upon which they differ, she found a mighty challenge in the complex makeup of her neighborhood.

The fear felt by the "oldest settlers" of "foreigners" when they began to come in large numbers; the age-old feud between Poles and Lithuanians, both of whom settled in large numbers in the area adjacent to the stock yards; the distrust of the Irish, who formed a large proportion of the community, of any newcomer who seemed to interfere in any way with them; the resentment of the white people of the north against the coming of the southern black people--these and other conflicts constituted a real menace to Miss McDowell's desire for unity. Her plan for minimizing this menace was to develop more and more natural ways in which people could work, play and live together. Her settlement offered such possibilities in the form of kindergartens for the smallest children, shops and game rooms for boys and girls, clubs, forums and social occasions of all kinds for adults. It was an outpost of the New Education. New ideas, new plans, new processes were tried freely. Some succeeded and some failed, but each experiment taught a lesson to Miss McDowell's active and open mind. With an honest desire to know all peoples, with a gay sense of humor that tided her safely over the misunderstandings, intentional or unintentional, that necessarily attended some of her friendly advances, she was able to win the confidence of many groups of people with divergent points of view. She gradually became the mediator in many disputes and has to her credit the peaceful "out of court" settlement of many a threatening disagreement among groups.

One of the most distressing of the many race prejudices she had to meet was that which grew up between the white and colored people on the southwest side of Chicago. Gradually the foreign-born whites came to share the resentment that the native whites had felt at the coming of the blacks, and at several periods of her life "back o' the yards" slight disturbances blazed into a fearful conflagration with serious loss of life and property.

In 1894, during the "Pullman Strike," negroes were brought into the yards in large numbers as strike breakers. There were riots and disorder; State and Federal troops were sent in. Rumors of depredations by the negroes were played up by the newspapers. It was just after this strike that Miss McDowell took up residence at Gross Avenue near 47th Street in

a block at both ends of which troops had been stationed and in which there had been riots and bloodshed. Feeling ran high but later, as the economic wrinkles were ironed out, most of the foreign-born people forgot their differences with the negroes, and the history of Miss McDowell's settlement shows a friendly tolerance between the two races. While no negroes lived in the district, large numbers of them constantly passed through on their daily trips to and from work and during many years of economic peace in the stock yards there were no conflicts of any kind.

When the meat strike of 1904 occurred, many colored men joined the Meat Cutters' Union and many held office and served as delegates to the Packing Trades Council. Up to this time most of the negro workers were forced to live in the distressingly crowded area known as "The Black Belt," but they were beginning to move south towards the west end of Englewood.

During the World War, as men by the thousands were called to war service, industry turned to the south for the men it needed. The demand for workers was advertised throughout the south and Miss McDowell reports that often five or six trains a day brought negroes to the stock yards. At first they were the unemployed and loafers, but later a finer class of people was lured from farms and towns by the promise of steady work and high wages. Often the standards of living of these better-conditioned negroes were higher than those of the foreign families of the district, and this the foreign people could not understand. The Black Belt, overcrowded before, became impossible for the negroes accustomed to decent living and occasionally they "broke over the line" established by the whites to define the negro residential area.

Trouble began to brew and culminated in 1919 in a race riot of such magnitude as the city had not known before. In four days thirty-eight people had been killed and about five hundred, black and white, had been injured and over a thousand made homeless; Mary McDowell was horrified at the violence of the attacks upon the negroes by the so-called "athletic clubs"--white men backed by politicians. Often these attacks were watched calmly by police officers, who did not interfere. "I was ready to apologize for being white," she said, "when I recalled the advice of a great psychologist that it was wholesome to suppress emotion by expressing a different feeling in some active way. It was on this advice that I called a conference of representatives of white and colored women's clubs which resulted in the organization of a large inter-racial committee."

During the last ten or fifteen years of her active service the race-relations campaign was probably Miss McDowell's most compelling interest. Through the Chicago Woman's Club, the Woman's City Club, the Illinois and the Cook County Federation of Clubs, the Federation of Colored Women's Clubs, she led the way. Study groups, lecture courses, musical programs, and radio talks were arranged. Scholarships for the education of talented young negro men and women were secured through her efforts. Studies of the housing of negroes and the evils resulting from the intolerable conditions under which they were forced to live were

carried on and the findings made public. Surveys developed the unequal chances for employment at decent wages and the economic insecurity of negroes. Better school buildings as well as better housing were needed for negroes, as they are needed today, and Mary McDowell was always the leader in co-operative efforts to secure such buildings. She knew the need for better recreational facilities and worked unceasingly for two playgrounds that are now accomplished facts.

During the last ten years of her life she did more to promote racial understanding between the white people and the negroes than any other Chicagoan. Probably her greatest satisfaction during these years came from seeing the negroes farther forward on the way, largely through her interest and work.



PREJUDICE

By
Mary McDowell

I HAVE always thought that many Americans, filled with distrust of the foreigner's ability to be assimilated, have distorted Zangwill's idea of the melting pot, seeing in it only a means of turning out a standardized American. To my mind Zangwill saw the crucible of experience changing the old into something quite new and individual. The weaving process, using the strong threads and rich colors brought from the treasure stores of the Old World, would express the assimilation better to my mind than any other figure. This weaving is seen going on all the time if one lives close to the immigrant peoples.

Old World prejudices were many in the stock yards in the nineties, but the kinds of prejudice indigenous to our own soil had not yet taken root in the minds of the newcomers. The prejudices brought over by the foreign born seemed at this time religious or political, but not economic. Economic prejudices came later.

At this time, for instance, the adult Lithuanians and Poles clung to their ancient hates because they were traditional. The following incident dramatized for me the feeling between these two races. One evening I introduced a fine young Lithuanian man to a beautiful Polish girl from a conservative family that still held to the historic complexes. Both young people were Roman Catholics and I did not dream that I was committing any offense. But this charming girl snubbed the young man, turning away with only a slight inclination of her head. When I upbraided her for her rudeness she remarked: "You would not understand if I explained, because it is a five hundred year old hate between Poland and Lithuania."

Our district has also suffered from the innate suspicion of new peoples. When the first Italian family came and purchased a cottage their Polish neighbors broke all the windows, but the Italians were undaunted. The family put in new glass and stayed on, eventually becoming accepted and admired members of the neighborhood. The latest migrants to come in are the Mexicans, who are accused, without warrant, of lowering wages from forty-seven to forty-five cents an hour. Recently (1927), during the summer when everybody was on the street, there were serious clashes but no fatal shootings. This shows that the economic struggle of the past and the prejudices against the newcomers are always with us where people of primitive habits predominate.

The children of these new Americans, especially if they attend the public schools, will remember the prejudices brought over by their parents only as a matter of interesting tradition.

The Woman's Club at the Settlement was organized entirely without race prejudice. Women of all nationalities were eligible for membership. First to come were the Irish, German and two or three Jewish women, all mothers of kindergarten children; later came other English-speaking women of various backgrounds. The Bohemian women's "Svoboda Club" confined its membership to its own nationality, but it was always hospitable to outsiders as speakers. The members were always ready to hear of any social or civic interests, but precautions must be taken not to stir up political or religious differences.

We did not have to meet the American prejudice against the negro, for then there were no colored people in the community. So far as we could see, the foreign born held no feelings towards the darker-skinned people. Desiring to emphasize Lincoln's emancipation of the slaves, the two clubs mentioned co-operated in a celebration of Lincoln's birthday. The Bohemian women chose Jane Addams as their speaker, while the settlement woman's club chose a colored woman orator, Mrs. Ida Wells Barnett, who was later made an honorary member of the club and each year appeared on its program.

The first generation of Irish had a latent sentiment against colored laborers, who interfered with their so-called "American rights"; and the second generation held a deeper-seated prejudice which showed itself during economic clashes; but among the Slavic peoples any antagonistic feeling against negroes grew very slowly.

The first colored family which came into the community was that of a cattle-butcher and member of the union who lived with his mother, a fine old-fashioned southern negro, and his two sisters in a cottage on Gross Avenue not far from our house. They purchased this cottage after the strike of 1904. Their Polish neighbors were most friendly, visiting and often inviting them to social affairs such as weddings and christenings. When the mother died they sold the cottage and our one colored neighbor left us.

I cannot adequately deal with the question of race prejudice in this "Back o' the Yards" district without giving a general view of the situation in the city as a whole, especially on the South Side where the colored workers in the packing houses were compelled to live. This so-called "Black Belt" lay between Wentworth Avenue and Wabash Avenue south from Twenty-Second Street to Fifty-Fifth Street. Negroes from that section never ventured west to the stockyards district to live until after they were received into the Meat-Cutters Union in 1904.

The first serious use of negroes as strike-breakers in the yards came in 1894, during the so-called "Pullman Strike." In this strike, organized by the Rail Road Men's Union, the unorganized stockyards workers were called out as sympathizers. Violence ensued and property was destroyed by the hoodlum element. The police and deputy sheriffs were ineffective in stopping the disorder. The militia was called out and President Cleveland, without Governor Altgeld's request, sent in regular troops with all the equipment of war time. The two "armies" were stationed at opposite ends of Gross Avenue, a diagonal street two blocks long; the regu-

lars were at Whiskey Point, a main entrance to the yards; the militia at Ashland Avenue and 47th Street. Our settlement was located on Gross Avenue. It was there that blood was shed. The old citizens of the town of Lake, the name applied to this district, have always held: "If only at the beginning the civil authorities had enforced order the militia need not have been brought out." The testimony of those who saw the strike near at hand was that the cars were burned by the toughs of the neighborhood, while it was the Rail Road Union men who put out the fires and did all in their power to prevent disorder.

When I came in the fall just after this strike I heard very little said concerning the negro strike-breakers. No feeling was shown to those who had kept on working after the strike was over. To the foreign born, color of the skin does not present a fixed line separating those who must live within the same political or industrial areas. The color line is much more likely to be drawn by native American whites, most of whom are ignorant of the new negro who has been educated and often has higher culture than those whites who consider all dark skins inferior. In our country the two races do not really know each other.

During the next ten years of peace in the yards even the occasional antagonism against the "Fink," as the Irish called the colored workers who came in 1894, was fading away. Then came the great organized meat strike of 1904. Even from the first Michael Donnelly, organizer of the Meat Cutters Union, said: "Every colored man or woman who works in the yards is welcome to our union, for we rise or fall together." Colored workers joined the unions in large numbers; they were appointed officials as well as delegates to the Packing Trades Council and were on an equality with the others.

The greatest influx of negroes from the south came during the World War period. Then fresh immigration was stopped and the over-supply of labor was not equal to what the packing plants and the other specialized industries considered necessary for their needs. These industries naturally turned to the south as the only place to supply this labor. Employment agents went first to the water fronts and the Rail Road centres of the south where the unemployed were likely to congregate. Here laborers were quickly and easily secured. Later a higher class of negroes was found on farms and in small towns. In printed posters and by word of mouth the news spread that high wages and plenty of work were up north. On some days five and six trains came into Chicago from Alabama. Wherever trains passed new groups gathered ready to start north. In some Alabama towns half the population migrated to the north. Some were lured by the prospect of high wages, but many said they wanted to get away from lynchings and floggings. The more ambitious wanted better schools for their children. One minister with all his flock left his old home, establishing his church here and settling near the place where his parishioners were to work.

All these newcomers crowded into the "Black Belt" and the congestion already existing in this area became a menace to health and morals. The population had doubled during the war, but no new houses had been built. Irritation grew in

these over-crowded houses, most of which had been built for one family. Bath rooms and toilets intended for one family were now used by many families.

The study made by the Department of Public Welfare in 1925 reported twenty-three persons living in a one-family dwelling on Wabash Avenue. In one house were seven families, aggregating seventeen persons. In another there were thirty-two persons using one bath-room. No changes were made in these one-family dwellings to provide for the many families that took up residence in them. Because of the lack of places to shelter them, people with standards above the average were compelled to seek shelter in derelict homes on Federal and South Dearborn Streets that had been condemned years ago. Gradually the situation became unbearable to those with higher standards of living who were able financially to move over the residential line set by custom and prejudice. This movement developed a different kind of irritation among the whites. It was then that certain organized groups of whites started the war-like slogan, "They shall not pass!"

It is a mistake to put upon the negroes all the responsibility for the change that came to Wabash and Michigan Avenues when these streets had been gradually deserted by their first residents. Those who left these expensive homes, many of whom I knew, in their resentment did not sense the fact that the urge which had brought these dark migrants from the South was a legitimate impulse common to all mankind, whatever its color or condition. The original white migrants from the steppes of Asia into Europe, from northern and southern Europe to America, from Mexico to the United States --yes, even our own Nordic forbears--all strove to change their habitations to better their conditions of living.

Very soon the older negro citizens in the over-crowded South Side determined to cross the line towards the lake. Those who could do so began to purchase property or to rent in the "white folks' quarters," for there were many vacant homes on the streets east of Wabash Avenue. Then began a method of terrorizing these ambitious negroes. From July 1, 1917 to July 27, 1919, in the days of Mayor Thompson, twenty-four bombs were thrown into "invaded" neighborhoods. White ruffians attacked colored people in playgrounds and parks. Con-



PLAN WORLD CONFERENCE TO PROMOTE UNIVERSAL HARMONY. Left to right: Dr. Edward S. Ames, University of Chicago; Miss Mary McDowell; Dr. Louis L. Mann, pastor Sinai congregation; Judge John P. McGoorty; the Rev. L. K. Williams, pastor Olivet Baptist church.

stant clashes occurred between the two races. During July of 1919 two negroes were shot by white toughs. "The police were either entirely unsuccessful or indifferent to the arresting of offenders," said the Lowden report. It is hard to be patient with a mayor whose election had been made sure three times by the Negro vote, or with the inefficiency of the State's attorney and the Chief of Police. The colored people knew who threw the bombs, but since their own political leaders were afraid to speak out they were helpless. However, if Chicago politics had not been at such a low ebb the police would have been more effective and the riot could have been stayed at the beginning.

An accumulation of irritations ended in a tragic riot begun at the water's edge of Twenty-Ninth Street and Lake Michigan on July 27, 1919. The occasion but not the cause of this outbreak was the fact that a little colored boy in swimming got over the line drawn by the white swimmers. A stone was thrown at the young swimmer, who sank to the bottom from a blow on the head, it is supposed. The colored people rushed to the policeman on the watch and asked the arrest of the boys throwing stones. The policeman refused to make any arrests. The fighting, begun on Sunday afternoon at the lake shore, spread throughout the "Black Belt." For four days it was uncontrolled. There was fighting all over the district, with shootings and clashes in many parts of the city, even the loop. During the four days, thirty-eight persons were killed; fifteen whites and twenty-three colored. Over three hundred negroes and one hundred and seventy-eight whites were injured, and one thousand were made homeless. Although no colored people lived back of the yards, they had to take cars at the intersection of 47th Street and Ashland Avenue to return home from work. Here and at all other exits from the yards they were met and struck down by young ruffians.

The notorious "Regan's Colts," who came from south of the yards, were the leaders in the most dastardly violence. At the exits from the yards on the first day of the riot negroes were met by gangs of these so-called "Athletic Clubs," each member flourishing an Indian club with which he knocked down and brutally treated the unfortunate victim while the police were looking on.

Now and then a brave act of humanity cheered our hearts. At the crowded corner of 47th Street and Ashland Avenue a negro who had been stunned had fallen in the street. The mob surrounded him and urged the driver of a truck with a team of horses to drive over the helpless man. One of the crowd was a powerful Slovak, well-known in the community as a professional boxer, and, I am happy to say, one of our settlement boys. When he saw what was about to happen he sprang to the horses' heads, grasped the bridles, turned the horses aside and lifted the terrified man to his feet. The victim ran westward with the mob after him. Unable to make his escape, he was brutally killed by the mob.

Another case of courage was seen on the east side of the yards where the Irish dominate and where the community feeling of the young Irish toughs ran high, often showing itself by driving towards the Black Belt with guns waving in their hands, crying "We'll get them niggers yet!" These young fellows were running down a colored man when the victim saw

a woman at the front door of her house. She beckoned to him to run through to the back of the place while she, with her splendid Irish courage, faced the yelling mob. The boys knew her as a neighbor and stopped to listen a while. As she told me, "I kept them with my talking as long as I could so that the poor creature could get away." It was near by that a brave Irish priest stood alone, keeping the mob from entering the church. "This is the Sanctuary," said he, "and not one shall enter until the civil authorities come to protect this negro."

In the negro district there were similar acts. Provident Hospital, for negroes, defied the negro mob by caring for white victims. A well-known political leader, a man of powerful physique and great influence among his race, driving his automobile down 31st Street saw a group of negroes surrounding two whites, a young woman and a young man who were coming from their work. He stopped his motor, faced the mob, put the young woman behind him for protection, then backed to his machine, all the while talking to the mob, telling them who he was and warning them of what would happen if they became violent. When at last he had the couple in his auto he drove away to a zone of safety.

This mob spirit held the mob for four days. After Monday, the first day of the disturbance, the negroes stayed away from the district, not going to work at all. For eight days we saw soldiers, mounted police, police on foot and on motor cycles parading up and down quiet streets in our neighborhood where not a negro lived nor had one appeared since that brutal Monday. Nothing was more disconcerting to us than to see a machine gun in our peaceful Davis Square Park and its gates closed to the children who looked in from the outside. As no one within the radius of a mile was in any danger this excessive military protection seemed to many of the community unnecessary. The interpretation offered by the white residents of the community, who felt perfectly safe because no negroes had been seen for days and none lived anywhere about, was that the military demonstration was intended as a warning to the workers in the yards who had been on the verge of a strike for the purpose of conserving their own organization--the union that had carried them through the war period.

It was evident that during the riot our Polish neighbors were not the element that committed the violence; it was committed by the second and third generations of American born young men from the "Athletic Clubs" which had grown up under the protection of the political leaders of this district, themselves mostly American born. These experiences seem to bear out the conclusion that our home-grown race prejudices have influenced the children of foreigners and that they did not bring with them this American obsession.

The propaganda set afoot by the enemies of the negro was evident during the riot and also after the disturbance and ill feeling had decreased. The new occasion was an incendiary fire which burned to the ground a large number of crowded tenements inhabited by Polish people back of the yards. Nobody could prove that the negroes did this; but it was the natural supposition, since the inmates of the tenements were all white. A Denver paper reported that negroes with burn-

ing torches went through the "back of the yards" district burning the houses of the whites. The Lowden report quoted the Grand Jury as stating that "the jury believes that these fires were started for the purpose of inciting race feeling by blaming the same on the negroes." The universal testimony of the community was that not a negro had been seen in our neighborhood since the first day of the riot. The testimony that I could gather from firemen and others was that no negro did the burning of the Polish tenements. The Colonel of the militia said that from reports given him by the police and the citizens he believed that whites with blackened faces started the fire. This notion was held by many but no one was found and no charges made.

On the other hand, the Chicago Press printed rumors and reports involving the whites that were later found to be false. The Lowden report quoted from the Herald-Examiner of July 30 the story that a negro had been killed by an Italian mob. It was stated that "he was shot, stabbed, and gasoline poured on his body, which was then set afire. The police extinguished the fire and took the body to the morgue." The Chicago Tribune of the same date said that he was stabbed and shot six times and then the body was saturated with gasoline and set on fire. The coroner's jury in commenting on the rumor said: "From our investigation this rumor is false and unsubstantiated." Another lying rumor in the press headlines was "Four Bodies Found in Bubbly Creek." No details were given but the statement was printed that "bodies of four colored men were taken from Bubbly Creek in the stock yards district, it is reported." This type of false story was common during the strike of 1904. When there was nothing sensational to report, strike-breakers were either thrown in or fished out of this mythical hole of missing men. One newspaper had sudden vengeance meted out to it by the citizens of the district. This paper had invented a story of a riot during the strike of 1904 and gave a sensational write-up with glaring headlines describing the driving of strike-breakers down Ashland Avenue into Bubbly Creek. When the wagon brought the next issue of the paper to our corner it was overturned by the neighborhood people gathered there, the papers thrown out and trampled in the mud amid the cheers of the crowd. It is such irresponsible reports as these that create more and more of the poison that leads to riots and clashes, for such stories are not soon forgotten.

It was an awful awakening to me to find many white people in Chicago who treat us whites with courtesy and consideration but show the savage underneath as soon as some occasion or contact arouses the inner race antagonism. This primal feeling I have often met in the pews of Christian churches that segregate the Christians of color off at one side or up in a gallery. "Let them have their own churches," or "Let them keep to themselves" are expressions that have come to me from Christians who do not see that such sentiments only add fuel to the smouldering coals of savage prejudice that in a moment may blaze forth in a fire of angry passion as it did in July, 1919.

I have come to realize that sentiments felt and expressed by men of all colors and all sorts and conditions make up an attitude of the public mind which is not recognizable until it bursts into action for weal or for woe. In response to a

hidden sentiment, how splendid was the common public demonstration when Lindbergh came to Chicago! How terrible was the common public action when hidden prejudices found vent in July, 1919! We have to learn that the cause of both these demonstrations was an accumulation of attitudes and sentiments long sheltered in all of us who rejoiced over Lindbergh or were shocked at the sudden expression of savagery in our own community during the riot. Of course it was the hoodlum element that did the deed. They gave expression to the underlying prejudices of those other citizens who allowed the political and governmental forces in the city the license to do as they pleased. In other words, indifference and neglect to enforce the law against the overt act were the outward expressions of the attitude of the citizens who did not raise their voices against the throwing of twenty-four bombs in the previous months.

After that week of storm and stress among an infuriated people I was convinced that Governor Lowden was right in the foreword to that remarkable report by the Inter-Racial Commission appointed to study the causes of these outbreaks when he said: "There is no domestic problem in America which has given thoughtful men more concern than the problem of the relations between the white and negro races. Colonization in Liberia is an idea long abandoned. It is now recognized that the two races are here to stay. It is also certain that the problem will not be solved by violence."

No number of bomb explosions can keep human beings from going where they determine it is best for them and their children. One of Chicago's best colored physicians, born and bred up north, said to me during the period of terrorizing with bombs: "I tell you, Miss McDowell, I won't allow anyone to tell me where I shall live. I intend to live where it is best for my children." This sentiment can be proved, I think, to be universal.

While conditions on many streets are depressing, one is cheered by a ride down South Parkway, the old Grand Boulevard, where the unafraid, ambitious negroes have purchased for their own use beautiful homes and even the largest synagogues and churches. This street reveals a high standard of a people advancing with courage.

No one can go through the experience of violence which I have tried to relate and not feel the futility of it all. I have to confess that I was stirred emotionally. I was ready to apologize for being white when I recalled that a great psychologist had said that the way to suppress one kind of emotion was by expressing a different feeling in some active way. On this wise advice I acted when I called a conference of representatives of colored and white women's clubs. This conference resulted in the formation of the Inter-Racial Committee, the result of which has been to spread the idea of inter-racial co-operation throughout the city.

There are other expressions of race prejudice even more far reaching than violent outbreaks. There are those that threaten the health and social welfare of a whole community. It is a serious danger to the entire population when six times as many negroes as whites in Chicago are dying of tuberculosis. The mortality rate for whites is continually

on the decrease, while for colored it is continually on the increase. However, we may soon see the effect of this up-curve of the negro on the down-curve of the white. Many factors enter into this dangerous situation: bad housing; congestion in over-crowded, unsanitary dwellings; new migrants from country communities where they lived and worked either out of doors or had houses open to the air; and the inaccessibility of sanitoriums to dark-skinned people. Very little has been done to isolate colored tuberculosis cases; the disease, therefore, spreads rapidly. Meager hospitalization, few clinics, an insufficient number of colored physicians and nurses who understand their own people--all of these are factors entering into the high death rate of negro people in our city.

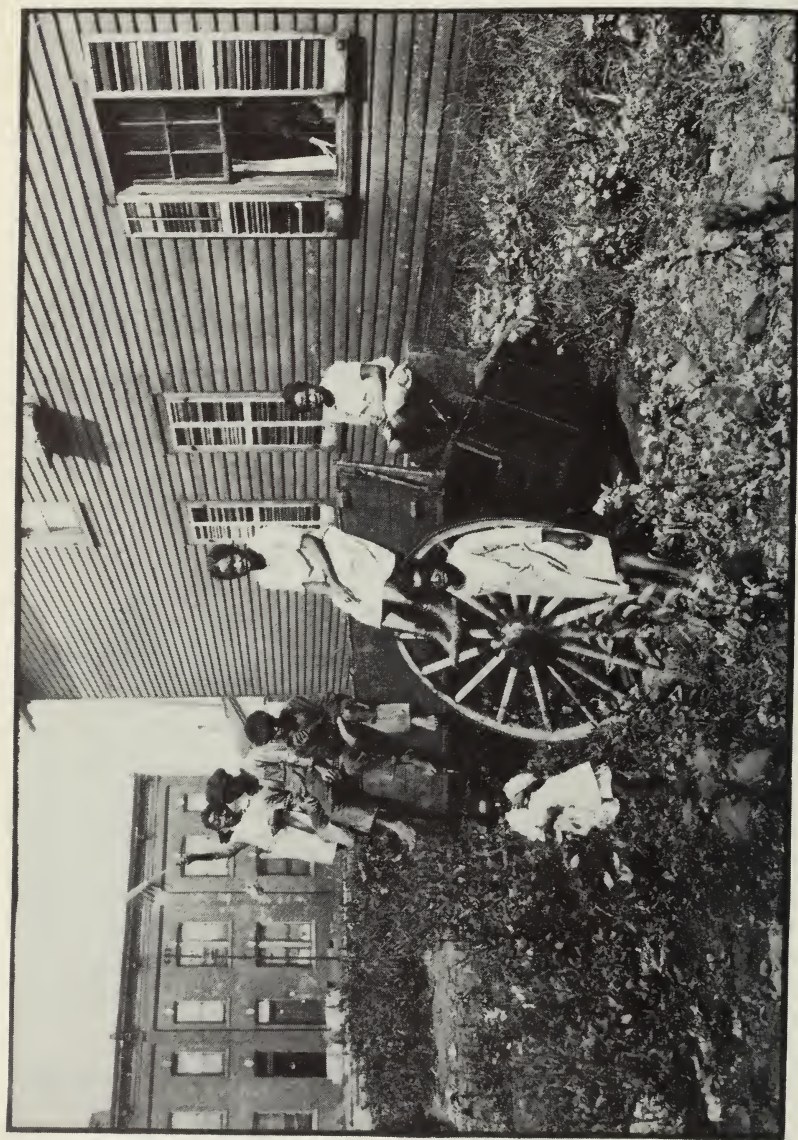
We know that open spaces in a congested city make for health and happiness. In the congested wards of the south side, there is a very small amount of space for play and recreation. We take great pride in our parks, boulevards and broad streets, and it is right that we should rejoice in their generous beauty. One park has been taken by the "dis-inherited," we are glad to say, but in the wards where the over-crowding is greatest, the colored people "have about one-fifteenth of the park and playground space available to the average resident of Chicago."* In the Second Ward, there are 7½ acres of parks and play space, making an average of over four thousand population to an acre; while Chicago as a whole has 507.4 persons to an acre of public park space.

Prejudice, like superstition, is a hindrance to the negro in his progress in science, as we see in the handicaps with which the negro medical man is confronted. Medical schools graduate colored students, but the students must search for hospitals willing to permit them to intern. Clinical experience is meager. Ambitious negro physicians often must go far from home to find advanced work in medicine. Opportunities which Europe offers to men or women of all races and complexions are very few in the United States.

Health is the foundation of race progress. Nothing must be allowed to obstruct the avenues to the health of a people, not even prejudice. It may be that segregated hospitals and clinics for students will have to be increased. Negro universities may have to enlarge their laboratories for advanced work for medical men and women who cannot find open doors in their own cities. The United States has over twelve million negroes, with only five thousand accredited negro physicians. If prejudice stands in the way of scientific freedom, then, until that day dawns when sanity rises with healing in its rays, we shall have to urge white universities to admit negroes or else provide negro universities to offer greater advantages to negro medical men and women.

Leaders of the different races have learned to know one another. Race relations committees have been appointed by civic organizations which see in this idea of a common, civic purpose a natural way toward better understanding. It gives one hope to learn how this co-operative method is

*Chicago Daily News Almanac and Year Book for 19 ; Dr. Harris, Study of Mortality among Chicago Negroes, Published by Elizabeth McCormick Memorial Foundation.



A CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND 1925

spreading in the South, where the Inter-Racial Commission has warned its state legislatures that, unless legislative action is taken by the state against lynching, the Commission will stand for the Congressional Anti-Lynching Bill. This attitude of mind, but not the method that is now being created, was in the South before the Civil War. It interests me that in my own family there was a mind that dared to speak out when the public opinion of his state was against his sentiment. It was James McDowell, representative from Rockbridge County, Virginia, and afterwards member of Congress and Governor of the state, who, in an anti-slavery debate in the Virginia Legislature in the year 1832, had the courage to express a sentiment which is as true today as it was early in the last century, when he said:

"You may place the slave where you please; you may dry up to the uttermost the fountains of his feelings, the springs of his thoughts; you may close upon his mind every avenue to knowledge, and cloud it over with artificial night; you may yoke him to labor as an ox which liveth only to work, and worketh only to live; you may put him under any process, which, without destroying his value as a slave, will debase and crush him as a rational being; you may do all this, and the idea that he was born free will survive it all. It is allied to his hope of immortality; it is the eternal part of his nature, which oppression cannot reach. It is a torch lit up in his soul by the hand of Deity, and never meant to be extinguished by the hand of man."

Can we not see a glimmer of the fulfillment of these prophetic words when we survey the progress made by the negro race since these words were uttered? Since that time, our country has passed through a civil war, the slaves have been set free, and, according to the anthropologists, the negro race has developed faster in those sixty years of freedom than any other race before it.* However, in spite of this unprecedented progress of the negro, we must sound a warning to our nation as a whole, that this fair land of ours today can no more live with the insanity of race prejudice in its heart than it could live, in the day of the Great Emancipator. "half slave and half free!"

The past decade has shown an emergence of young negro artists of a race but sixty years out of slavery. This remarkable expression of the spirit of this race has surprised all who have watched the coming into the dramatic, the musical and the literary world of these men and women of culture of the finest type.** New York has on its boards plays that are written and acted by negroes. Broadway has more than recognized the dramatic possibilities of these people whom

*Professor Fay Cooper Cole of the University of Chicago, an anthropologist whose word is an authority, wrote me that: "No people ever made greater progress in a like period of time than the American negro since the Civil War."

**"Negro art is sound art because it comes from a primitive nature upon which a white man's education never has been harnessed. It embodies the negro's individual habits, and reflects their sufferings, aspirations and joy during a long period of acute oppression and distress"--Albert C. Barnes, The New Negro, p. 19.

no handicaps can stop in their struggle upward. The rich folk material that is so truly American has been discovered at last. Alain Locke, Professor of Philosophy at Howard University, Washington, D.C., in his introduction to the volume of Plays of Negro Life, nine of which plays are by white writers and nine by negroes, says: "The negro experience has been inherently dramatic. No group experience in America has plumbed greater emotional depths. Indeed the essential, elemental forces of great drama in all time--epic turns of experience, tragic intensity of life, discipline and refinement of the emotions--have been accumulating, like underground well-springs, for generations in Negro life, and now are beginning to seek artistic vent and find free-flowing expression." The young poets who have suddenly published their poems which are racial as well as universal in their expression are an unmistakable sign of the beginning of a renaissance of negro intellectual life. The significance of the Negro in Art Week in Chicago, with its exhibit of primitive African art, modern painting, literature, handicraft and music of the negro, was distinctly felt. At the Art Institute over five thousand people viewed the exhibit of primitive art and of modern painting. During this week the interpretation of this new and hopeful phase of negro life by Alain Locke and James Weldon Johnson to thirty different audiences of both white and colored people has brought the perplexing problem up to a point beyond controversy. It has presented a challenge to both races to rid themselves of prejudices and to meet frankly these new phases of life of a people who are here to stay and who must be understood.

CHAPTER IV

OUR PROXIES IN INDUSTRY

Foreword by Agnes Nestor
President, Women's Trade Union League
of Chicago

THE BURDEN BEARERS

MARY MCDOWELL championed many causes, as this volume will show, and it is difficult to weigh her interests and know exactly which was closest to her heart. But one cause early championed is rooted so deeply that the other interests she had in later years could not crowd it out--the cause of working women. She once said that if she could keep but one of her organization memberships she would retain that in the Women's Trade Union League.

As early as 1903 she became allied with the trade union women through the National Women's Trade Union League, which she had helped to sponsor. She became first president of the Illinois Women's Trade Union League, organized in January, 1904, which later became the Chicago League. For want of another name for one not a trade unionist she had been referred to in this new organization as a non-unionist. She would not accept this title because of what it implied, so the name of ally was used for her and other good friends who were not eligible to trade union membership.

She believed strongly that working women should be heard and she wanted to strengthen their movement that they might be more effective. When she attended legislative hearings she was impressed with the way these trade union women were listened to and with great pride would say: "They are the real thing, that's why they get attention." She called them "The Burden Bearers," and said that upon them, the enlightened organized women of the Trade Union League with their allies and friends, rests the duty of awakening the helpless ones in the industrial struggles of the day.

She considered the struggle of the machine a human struggle and urged that rather than fight the machine the thinkers in the labor movement should make it win for them leisure, education and a chance for the soul to develop.

With Jane Addams, Mrs. Ellen M. Henrotin, Gertrude Barnum, Anna Nicholes, Mrs. Raymond Robins and others, she began in the early days of the Women's Trade Union League to create public opinion regarding the conditions under which women were working. In the fall of 1905 she and her devoted group arranged a program for the convention of the Illinois Federation of Women's Clubs with a trade union girl as a speaker. This was the first time the story of the working woman was presented to club women. When the National League of Women Voters was organized, following the winning of suffrage, she was active in helping to establish a Woman in Industry Division and was its first Chairman.

She realized that to work in the labor movement she would have to serve her time, to prove her loyalty because the League was new and many were ready to question whether she

and her co-workers would stand by in the stress of a strike and the difficulties besetting the labor movement, too often unpopular. She understood this, but when she and her allies met the test she wanted them to be given the place they deserved. She won that place of trust in the hearts of the trade union men and women and kept it, beloved to the end.

Her first major labor experience was in the great stock yards strike in 1904, in which she took an important part. It was in this strike that she was given the title "Angel of the Stockyards." Just how she acquired this name we do not know, but it stayed with her in the district "back o' the yards." A very different title was given her in her early attendance at conventions of the American Federation of Labor. Attending these conventions with her as early as 1904 and '05 was Mary Kenny O'Sullivan, the pioneer labor woman who in her early days worked in Chicago. These two were called "the Fighting Marys" because of their spirited efforts to focus attention upon the problems of working women --the need for organization among them and for more women organizers; the demand of trade union women for recognition and for the right to take their place in the labor movement. The Women's Trade Union League had been organized for these same purposes. She aided in many strikes and had some very unusual experiences. In the broom makers' strike in 1914, when many foreign born women were striking against the low wages and deplorable conditions, she served on a committee to interview the head of a large wholesale house, distributors of the brooms made by this strike-bound company, to urge him to use his influence in securing a settlement of the strike. The next day she was served with an injunction secured by the broom company restraining her from assisting in the strike.

Her early legislative experience was very notable because it brought about the first investigation into the working conditions of women and children, published in 1911 in eighteen volumes by the United States Bureau of Labor. The move for this investigation started in the Chicago League and became national through a committee appointed by the National Women's Trade Union League, of which Mary McDowell was then chairman. First she won the support of President Theodore Roosevelt, and with the help of Commissioner of Labor Charles P. Neill she started in 1905 to secure an appropriation of \$150,000.

Her work in Washington was pioneer work because at that time the problems of women in industry were little known or considered. New ground had to be broken. She said that for the first time members on the floor of Congress discussed these problems and asked questions about the conditions in industry that had caused the demand for the proposed investigation. Her great difficulty was not to persuade Congress to vote the appropriation but to have it assigned to the right channel so that the study would be of value. Members of Congress had been accustomed to use the census figures for any information they wanted, and felt that the Census Bureau should make this investigation. Mary McDowell and her committee, made up of Jane Addams, Mrs. Raymond Robbins and Lillian Wald, backed by the labor organizations and women's clubs, wanted more than simply to have the workers counted. They wanted to know about the conditions under

which women were working, the hours of labor and the rates of pay. They wanted the human kind of facts that would tell them about the death rate in certain industries and the relation of the long working hours to the health of the workers and other things that might be a basis for later protective legislation. This was the fight she had to make, and through it she learned for the first time the influence of organized groups and the effect of pressure from "back home" such as all these organizations exerted. She went to the labor men for help. At that time John Mitchell was the leader of the miners. He sent word to all his district officers to make their views known in Washington. She said it was most telling to see the change in the attitude of congressmen after the telegrams poured in, and to see the shift of their support to her side. She went to the American Federation of Labor and the Illinois State Federation of Labor conventions and to the biennial convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, as well as to the Illinois State convention.

Steadily gaining support, the bill passed Congress in January, 1907, but not without a question as to the right of the federal government to make such an investigation. This last obstacle over, the appropriation was passed, giving \$300,000 for the investigation, double the amount first requested.

She had an amusing experience while for the first time attending a convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor. So rare was the attendance of women then that the two women delegates, Mary McDowell and the writer, were asked to sit on the platform during each session. The officers of the convention, with some of the delegates, were taken down into a mine one noon and, by accident or intent, they were kept underground and delayed in reaching the convention. Mary McDowell was asked to preside until the president returned. A resolution condemning Speaker Cannon of the House, known as "Uncle Joe," introduced in the convention, was referred to a committee, but somehow the introducer had not been able to get it before the convention. It was reported while Miss McDowell was in the chair. As presiding officer she had the task of using the gavel to declare this resolution passed. Even Miss McDowell did not realize until afterwards that she had played a part in the condemnation of a man upon whom she had to depend considerably when she went back to Washington in her final campaign to secure the appropriation for the investigation for which she was working. The story of her wielding of the gavel on that resolution went into the newspapers and the effect was to make the Speaker believe that she must be reckoned with as a great political force in Illinois. This served to strengthen her work rather than to hurt it as she had first feared.

Following this convention the women were given a special session at each convention of the Illinois State Federation of Labor until they were definitely accepted. Mary McDowell always took part in these special sessions of the convention and enjoyed them.

It is difficult to retrace all her work over this long period of time--more than thirty years.

She was one of the active sponsors of the Chicago Industrial Exhibit in 1907 at the Brooks Casino which focused the attention of the citizens on the sweated industries with the aim of securing legislation against the abuses of this system.

It was for this exhibit that the picture "Sacred Motherhood" was drawn by the late well-known cartoonist, Luther Bradley. That telling picture portrayed the mother nursing her baby in a sweatshop home while at the sewing machine making garments. The picture was later used on all the literature in the great garment strike in 1910 when again Mary McDowell played an important part.

When the tragic fire in the Triangle Shirt Waist shop in New York City took its toll of the lives of 143 women workers, Mary McDowell was quick to realize that just such a tragedy might happen in Chicago. She headed a Committee from the Women's Trade Union League to urge the City Council to establish a Fire Prevention Bureau in the Fire Department. This Bureau was to make regular inspections and set up standards for the prevention of fires. Again she won; the bureau was established and has done excellent work. In "Fire Prevention Week" she was recognized with a part on the program of the Fire Department in the earlier years. Few may now remember how this Fire Prevention Bureau was established and Mary McDowell's part in it with the help of the Women's Trade Union League.

Her war work was an important service to working women as well as to her country. She was appointed a member of the Women in Industry Committee of the Labor Committee with Samuel Gompers as chairman under the Council of National Defense. She joined with the Trade Union women in insisting upon proper standards of work so that efficiency of workers and quantity of production might be maintained. She went to England during the war period because she wanted to study more closely the experience of the women workers in that country under the stress of war conditions. She knew that in Great Britain, in the early part of the war when the need for munitions was so great, the women in that industry were worked beyond the point of endurance. Only when the output was lessened did that country become concerned about its women workers. They found after a special study, as Mary McDowell points out, that long working hours did not pay because when women were fatigued, their efficiency was impaired and the output reduced. The work of the Committee on Women in Industry was to see that the same mistake was not made here and that industrial standards were maintained. Our government did heed this warning and maintained satisfactory standards as one way of defense.

Even after she became a public official in Mayor Dever's cabinet as Commissioner of Public Welfare, she did not slacken her assistance to the cause of working women. Strikes were brought to her to mediate. Under her department she held public hearings in the dressmakers' strike, met with citizens' committees, and even went into the county jail to get stories of the girls who were made to serve jail sentences of 30 to 60 days two years after the strike ended. These women were charged with violating an injunction during the strike and sentenced by the judge who issued the injunc-

tion. It took two years for the case to reach the State Supreme Court, but the verdict of the lower courts was sustained; and these women, some out of the trade, some married and one with a young baby, all had to go to jail to satisfy the courts. Mary McDowell headed a committee to ask the Governor to grant them a pardon. She could get a hearing for them when they could not get it for themselves. But all the officials involved claimed that they could not act in this case. So with the strike almost forgotten and the issues over, these women went to jail.

She made many trips to Springfield to attend legislative hearings. At one of these, held by Governor Deneen, merchants throughout the state came to Springfield to ask him to veto the amended ten-hour law for women workers, which extended the ten-hour limitation to mercantile as well as to other establishments. This became a law with his signature and stayed on the statute books for twenty-six years.

In her chapter Miss McDowell deplores the long working day in Illinois. She did not live to see the passage of the eight-hour law for women that came within a year following her death. She was always moved when she pleaded for the eight-hour law and liked to quote Ruskin: "It's a shame for any nation to make its young girls weary." She said that some day when we have lifted the burden from the weak and helpless in the working world the best in all of us will have a chance to develop. She helped to pave the way for a victory she did not live to celebrate.

Mary McDowell lived a long life and a full life, devoted to causes too often unpopular. She had the satisfaction of doing the work she loved and of helping those least able to help themselves. This with her was fundamental. Her wholesomeness, her sense of humor, her wit, her friendliness and common sense and all the rare qualities of her delightful personality endeared her to all who knew her. Her human approach to any problem made it easy for any one to go to her with a personal question. Greatly beloved and admired, Mary McDowell will be remembered as the champion of the Burden Bearers.



OUR PROXIES IN INDUSTRY

By

Mary E. McDowell

THE IMPORTANCE of Woman in Industry did not receive recognition until the World War. Her value increased in the eyes of the public when she was mobilized as an indispensable force in the second line of defense. Her work alone made the fighting line effective. It was Marshall Foch of France who gave due recognition to the real meaning of these millions of women behind the machines. "If for twenty minutes," he said, "those munition women of France and England should stop work, the allies would lose the war." At last, from awful necessity, their value was recognized.

In this time of peace, it would be well if for twenty minutes we stopped to wonder what would happen if all the gainfully occupied women in our own country (eight and one-half million ten years after the War, ten and three-quarters million in 1938) should fold their hands for a week; or if the millions of women in "producing and distributing trades" should be called from work. Have we imagination strong enough to visualize what would happen to their dependents who look to them for food, clothes and personal service? If these millions of women were called out of the factories, another revolution would be upon us. The women of leisure would have to give up their dependence upon ready-made clothes and ready-made foods; they would not have time for clubs, for education, for travel that they now have because other women are doing their work for them.

Due recognition, so far as I know, has not yet been made of the heroism of the women in munition plants during the War. Mere girls of eighteen filled shells with explosives, working alone in concrete cubicles, isolated for fear an explosion would endanger the whole plant. Very little notice, too, has been taken of women in the factories filled with deadly explosives who stayed at their work during air raids, though large numbers had children at home. All these war workers, both in America and Europe, had two obligations:-- to supply munitions for the soldiers at the front and food for their children at home. Mrs. A. C. Ladd of Boston, the sculptor who made such remarkable masks for the soldiers with mutilated faces, is the only one who has created a memorial for these brave women. It is a bronze plaque showing the woman filling shells and her vision of the two obligations that held her to her task.

One of the very few good results of the war was the revelation to men of the adaptability and versatility of women in lines never before open to them. Women were surprised at themselves when they found that they could run a lathe, or a steam engine, that they could use tools in many trades where they never before had the opportunity to test themselves. To the surprise of the men of the metal trades, it was found, in a large plant in England, that woman was the better temperer of steel. When I told this fact to an engineer of

large experience in the iron and steel industry, he remarked, "How stupid we experts have been! Of course women can temper steel even better than men because they have a keener color sense."

While we of the United States had not quite the heroic tests of Europe, our own women were not found wanting in courage. Women from our stockyards neighborhood worked days and nights in the packing houses, in freight sheds, loading and unloading heavy boxes and packages. The Commission on Women in Industry of the War Work Council investigated the strenuous work put upon women in lifting these heavy boxes. When, after careful diagnosis by women physicians, it was found injurious to the women, the matter was brought to the attention of the management. When the War Department, in response to the National Committee's request, accepted standards not injurious to women, the industries at large generally acceded to them also. The following standards for munition women workers were in use during the war:--

1. Adult labor.
2. Wages:
 - a. The highest prevailing rate of wages in industry which the contract affects.
 - b. Equal pay for equal work.
 - c. Those trades where there is no wage standard whatsoever shall be placed in the hands of an adjustment committee.
 - d. That all wages be adjusted from time to time to meet the increased cost of living--by this committee--and that other wage questions be submitted to it.
3. The eight-hour day.
4. One day rest in seven.
5. Prohibition of night work for women.
6. Standards of sanitation and fire protection.
7. Protection against over-fatigue and industrial diseases.
8. Prohibition of tenement house labor.
9. Exemption from the call into industry of women having small children needing their care.
10. Exemption from the call into industry of women two months before and after child-birth.

Having given my tribute to the second line of defense during the war, I want to come back to the days of peace before and after the war; for our obligation to those proxies of ours in industry has not yet ceased.

In the early days of the packing industry, women did the sewing of ham bags at home; later, at the plants. As the industry developed, they came into other departments. After strikes of the young men and boys, they took their places in departments that eventually were accepted as women's work. It was not until women in the yards were given a knife as a tool that their fellow men workers were brought to a protesting mood. In the development of the packing industry, whenever a new by-product was to be utilized, more workers were called in to work in the new departments. When discontented young men and boys, who were always "fooling," as is the case of boys who should be playing, struck and walked out, the women were put in their places,

generally at a cheaper rate of wages. After a time the canning, stuffing, painting and labeling departments were given over entirely to women, mostly Irish, German or Bohemian. When Polish and Lithuanian women came in large numbers, they were tried out in the sausage room, where men filled the casings by machinery, but the linking was done by hand. The women stood on each side of the table, with a yard or more of the stuffed casings which they held at each end and twirled by a simple, monotonous movement of the wrists, this twist giving the link to the sausage. This process of twisting the wrists went on for ten hours a day, every day in the week, if there was work.

When groups of girls from Galicia and Lithuania followed the young men who had come over in gangs a few months previously, they were put to work in the trimming room, where they were given a knife to cut fat from lean beef and pork. Then it was that men, who considered that the knife was a tool to which they had an exclusive right, made protest, dubbing the women "petticoat butchers." They forgot that women in their own kitchens had, for years, used the knife in preparing food for the men and children of the family.

These newly arrived immigrant girls had no need of English; they required only a knife and obedience. They worked as partners, two women filling a pail with lean meat for which they were paid so much a pail. The trimming department became the non-English speaking woman's monopoly. The room where the pork was prepared for export was especially given over to the "greenies." The English-speaking workers shunned the room because of the unhealthful conditions. The pork for export had to be kept at a temperature near to freezing. The room was a cold storage type, without windows or outside light or air. The walls were dripping with ice cold water. The women worked on a damp, ice cold floor with, perhaps, a board beneath their feet. This room was colder than our ice box, according to a thermometer carried in our party. The superintendent told us that it was the model of "scientific construction, for here nothing is wasted." The human waste evidently had not yet become the concern of the scientific expert, as it did later in England, when the health of the munition women workers became a matter of supreme importance in the winning of the war.

In the early nineties, there were no child labor laws, nor compulsory school statutes, for boys and girls of eleven worked in the stockyards. I am reminded of Hannah who, at eleven years, was working in Libby's; who, at thirty, was thrown out on the industrial scrap heap. As she was uneducated and untrained, she could not fit into any well-ordered work, and was no longer wanted in the specialized industry that had used her up. One day, as we were planning for her relief, for she was desperate, she cried out in her distress: "If only Jane Addams and you had been on deck when they took me from school, they wouldn't dared put me to work, and now I would be fit for something!" She had native ability that needed only education and training to have made her the able and efficient woman demanded by the better grade industries. Social workers and organized labor are largely responsible for the good laws of child protection now on the Illinois statute books. Bright girls like Hannah cannot again become victims.

In the early days, the young girls who came to work in the stockyards, having eaten a meager breakfast of bread with tea or coffee, were always hungry and faint at ten o'clock, after two hours of piece work. Before efficiency methods prevented, they were allowed to stop for a "bit of beef tea" that was in the process of making near by. When modern methods no longer allowed the girls to "sneak" the beef tea, they handed around a small bottle of gin, for they found that a little bit of this stimulated their spirits and warmed their empty stomachs until the noon whistle blew. The girls were grown women when I came to the district and knew them, many of whom still had the habit which had become a curse to them as mothers or workers.

The housing of the unmarried, immigrant girls who had come in gangs became a very serious problem in the community, since the girls were compelled to room with families where the single men had already been housed. The over-crowding, with the promiscuous living, at last produced an unmoral, as well as immoral, condition which moved the Polish Catholic parishes to combine in opening a lodging house for working girls and a day nursery for children. As the Sisters in charge became our neighbors, we made friends with them as early as possible and rejoiced to find the lodging house and nursery both well run and well filled. It was the first definite social work offered to the community by the Church, which makes us hope that a closer co-operation between the Church and the social workers of the community may grow out of these socially religious efforts.

The "Iron Man" of industry wears out even the young, unless they revolt from the monotony of the repetitious processes of the specialized industry. The young workers flit from one job to another in search of better conditions or more interesting work. The reiteration of a simple and single process is benumbing to the mind and wearing to the nerves of young people who are developing into manhood or womanhood. If they try to keep young and are keen for life and the pursuit of happiness, they grow reckless. Youth revolts when walled in by circumstances it cannot overcome or understand. I am reminded of a lovely, young Irish-American girl, eighteen years of age, an age that demands a good time. Excitement oftentimes is to this type of girl the only antidote for ugly, benumbing work. An older friend, standing by, heard a woman of the shop asking this young girl to go to a dance at a road-house of questionable reputation. The older friend interceded, pleading with the young girl, who was craving an adventure, not to go to that place Saturday night. Youth revolted in her reply and challenged all of us when she said: "I don't care what anybody says, I'm going there, for I'm so tired when Saturday night comes that I don't care a damn where I go!" She was only eighteen years of age. She went, to her sorrow later.

It was a very different type of girl whom I met on her way home from work during the war. She also was young, and weary too from standing ten hours, putting up food for the armies. I begged her to be seated, saying, "You look quite worn out." "Yes," she said, "I am awful tired, but you know, I oughtn't to say nothin'. I'm doin' my bit, ain't I, for I'm puttin' up food for the boys over there." "Putting up food for the boys over there" appealed to her imagination

as, in ordinary times, her sordid job failed to do. It may be necessary for society to see to it that not only must there be release from a long day's work, but that the young must have their imaginations fed with better patterns than the average movie turns out. To-day (1927) the movie is the only place where the hungry mental life of the young worker receives stimulus. "Leisure is liberty" and a right of every human being. That this "right to leisure" must become a statutory right is the belief of Florence Kelley and of all who want the divine gift of personality to have its full development.

Ruskin, many years ago, warned us that "It's a shame for a nation to make its young girls weary." This was discovered by the allied nations in 1914 to 1918, when munitions were lacking for their armies, but forgotten in most of the legislation since that time. During the war the women workers of England, upon whose work the English soldiers were depending, were working day and night and Sundays, but not producing the quota needed. So urgent was their work that the government forgot that these women were more than machines and were only reminded that they were humans by the fact that there was undue sickness among them which prevented continuous production. The French women, they learned, were turning out the product demanded and on an eight-hour day, with two hours at midday for lunch and rest, one day's rest in seven, and working at night every other week instead of continuously. The English commission made their report and recommended that they follow the French plan, which they did with good results. It is not only "a shame for a nation to make its young girls weary," but a foolish and wasteful thing as well, as the Health Commissioner of England discovered.

Night work for men or women has long been looked upon as socially bad. This was emphasized in the report of the Commission on Health of Munition Workers, in which we read: "Imperative necessity has revived, after almost a century of disuse the night employment of women in factories." In 1906, by international agreement, twelve European countries banished night work for women by a signed convention drawn up at the International Conference on Labor Legislation meeting at Berne, Switzerland. This agreement was based upon inquiries into the economic, physical and moral effect of night work on women. These half-forgotten facts had peculiar significance to the people of the United States when the war time industrial pressure was upon them. A concrete experience brought this home to us when we learned that our neighborhood mothers of young children under school age were working all night, from six in the evening to five-thirty in the morning, often without proper sleep in the day time. Our neighborhood physicians told us of the sickness of these mothers who worked while others slept, and then were unable to sleep when the whole world around them was awake and busy. These doctors accused the women of greed; some blamed lazy or inebriated husbands as the cause. During the period, with the scarcity of manual labor came the temptation of high wages. Mothers in our neighborhood took on night work "because," said they, "my man he sleep with the children while I work." To do justice to these mothers, we had a study made of forty-six families who lived in our community and found that only one had a "no-good man," but that sever-

al had husbands ill with rheumatism, the so-called occupational disease of the packing industry where men worked in steaming atmosphere, going from the torrid to the frigid zones every day in their routine work. We found that debts for sickness, hospital and special treatment, amounting from \$300 to \$600, weighed heavily upon these mothers. A house that was nearly paid for, a second mortgage due, called for money. Two mothers had sick babies who would never get well until the doctor's bill was paid, they believed. One woman wanted a piano for her girl, surely a legitimate desire. But when did they sleep? They left home at six in the evening and returned at five-thirty in the morning, just in time to prepare breakfast for the husband who must leave early for his day's work. Then the children must be made ready for school. It was found that 90 per cent of the forty-six mothers had children under school age. These little ones had slept all night, which made them active and noisy at the time the night-working mother ought to be asleep. Then came the noon-day meal which she must prepare, to say nothing of the many other household duties. "But when do you sleep?" we asked. "Sleep, sleep!" they replied; "Oh, I sleep when I can. Maybe I wait for Saturday and Sunday when my man's at home and I no work." They confessed they were cross both with the husband and the "boss." One wise physician told us: "These women are not sick; they are only tired. I tell them: 'Sleep and sleep and sleep, then you will get well.'" One woman whom I knew very well was so long recovering that all of her savings were used up on hospital treatment.

This study, when shown to the packing house superintendents, made such a deep impression that orders were given not to hire women with children under school age. Since the war, very little has been done by legislation to shorten the work day, or to prohibit night work. Illinois is still satisfied with a ten-hour limit for women's work, be the ten hours at night or on Sundays. At present, all night long in the loop in Chicago, there are large numbers of women cleaning the great office buildings. Stories are told of the lack of protection to the women who work under men, and who come home at all hours after midnight. Many mothers in our community leave home after preparing supper for the family and return at two or three A.M. or far into the morning. One of the loop night workers lives opposite our house. She is a widow with a boy twelve years and a girl seven. As she leaves home at four-thirty in the afternoon, returning at three the next morning, the boy of twelve is the head of the house. He carries the key, and has also the responsibility of keeping the fire burning, giving supper to the little sister, and seeing that she is put safely to bed. But he is only a little boy, who easily forgets his duties when the movies or the fascinating street holds his attention. Often the Settlement has to care for little sister until ten or eleven o'clock, when brother remembers.

A democracy cannot be built on weary mothers of anemic children. The future mothers must be of the highest physical, mental and moral standards if this government is to be a true democracy. As our population is more than half manual workers, its destiny will depend largely upon the kind of such men and women who are bred for the future. Our program must be a shorter work day, no night work, wholesome recrea-

tion and adequate education.

It is sad to reflect that the work of the youth has become so mechanized that money alone is the urge in their monotonous efforts. It is deadening to twirl one's wrists in sausage linking for ten hours, to wrap cans, stick on labels, pack chip beef by the thousands of glasses or boxes all exactly alike, knowing the the greatest number of these uninteresting things counts most in the pay envelope, which is the only interesting thing about the week's work. Piece work is more exciting than day work because it appeals to the gaming spirit. A worker told me that he kept his watch in front of him to see if he could outdo himself each day compared with the day before. This may be a good method for business, but what of the effect on the worker? At first both men and women rather enjoy the excitement of it. Nothing is more feverish in its effect upon women workers than the piece work system which urges to high speed. But the strong, physically and nervously, make more money by it and can stand the strain. To those of finer fiber, whose strength comes from nervous force, piece work often results in catastrophe to the individual. Only the tough natured can stand up under such strain; the ones with fine possibilities are crushed by the mad pace.

To employers the excess speed of a machine means more production, while the human element in production is forgotten. The glove workers I know so well told me of their strike because the speed of their machine was to be increased from 3,000 revolutions per minute to 3,300 revolutions per minute. To the employers this seemed a foolish protest. It was not until an intelligent worker quoted to them from Miss Goldmark's enlightening book, Fatigue and Efficiency, that they saw the justice of the girls' objection to the increased speed.

The case of my friend Maggie illustrates the operation of this speeding up process. Maggie was a rare type of young woman, born in Ireland and brought over to America when a baby. Her parents were simple, honest, old-country folk, happy living in a few rooms in their old time ways. The three beautiful daughters, as handsome in face and figure as the Gibson type so much admired in the nineties, were Americans in their desires. Maggie's standards were high. She wanted more rooms, a parlor where her younger sisters might receive their guests, for she disapproved of corner courtships or meetings at public dance halls. She wanted a piano for the sisters, but, above all, she wanted for herself a room that she loved to call her "studio." None of these things could be secured by any means except through her efforts. She must earn the money necessary; the sisters could help, but the extras must come from her wages at piece work. With the urge of an ideal driving her on, she painted cans and labeled cans by the thousands a week that she might win the amount needed to supply the demands of her fine nature. Maggie was quick, nimble fingered and intelligent. She won out. She made the sum set for her goal. The boss knew that even the "Pace Maker," a useful person in a piece work shop, must not be allowed to go beyond the amount the superintendent permitted. Maggie was the unconscious "pacemaker" of her room, but she set her pace too high. A cut came each time in the price per piece. Three times Maggie made her

supreme effort, each time came the cut, until she and the girls began to see that it did not pay.

When the third cut came in piece rates, these unorganized girls laid down their tools and walked out of the shop. Hannah, mentioned before in this chapter, who had heard of the red flag for revolt, tied a red handkerchief to an umbrella and led the girls down Packers' Avenue. She was, of course, held by the employers to be the leader of the strike. She was blacklisted, although she had worked in Libby, McNeill and Libby's since she was eleven years of age. She was never allowed to get a job in any of the other packing houses. She foolishly permitted an inexperienced young lawyer, as a test case, to sue the packing firm for blacklisting her. Of course she lost the suit and was left without a job in the one line of work she knew. When desperate, hungry and discouraged, a few interested friends set her up in a small business in the center of the yards.

Maggie's work kept her in a room where the sunlight seldom reached her work bench, where the smell and taste of turpentine were pungent and pervasive. After a time, Maggie said she could not eat or drink, for everything tasted of paint. She won the finer things she needed, but she was stricken with tuberculosis. She lay in her "studio," as she called her room at home, talking to the girls who came to her bedside day after day, of the injustice of piece work and the cuts. "Girls," she said, "we have to live for those who come after us. We ought to do something together." This small group of Irish girls, in response to Maggie's inspiring suggestions, organized a club which they named for the Irish woman patriot, Maude Gonne, whom they admired for her courage in fighting for Ireland's freedom. Maggie lived just long enough to see this club of girls organized into a union of packing house women, as a part of the Meat Cutters' Organization. Three spirited Irish girls were made the leading officers of the new union, Maggie the first Vice-President. All officers were dismissed from their jobs, at which they had worked from ten to fifteen years, as soon as it was known that they were a part of the men's union. The years' experience with these wage-earning women was full of inspiring suggestions of the usefulness of organization to them economically and socially. It was a school in self government, lessons in largeness of view, whereby petty, individual interests gave way to those of the group.

The packing companies did not see this side of organization. As they had the financial power that enabled them to wait and not starve, they won the strike, while the wage-earners, without such power, lost. I am glad to read in the Czecho-Slovak Constitution that the workers have the right to organize to better their conditions economically, and that no organization is permitted to interfere with this right. Even if the United States were as advanced as this new republic of central Europe, it would not be found easy to organize the wage-earning women to better their economic conditions. The workers are young; they dream of marriage, of giving up the world of wages for that "not-impossible he, wrapped up in mystery." Working girls do not differ from the young in any walk of life; they are no more intent upon that mysterious future than is the daughter of their boss. The married women workers are troubled with many things, often children,

as well as a husband. The burdens that they are carrying are too heavy for them to add, as they think, another one of organization. The ideal is for men and women to be in the same organization, we are told by Europeans. There is no good reason why union men should not bring the women into their organizations and train them in responsibility.

The colored women who are coming into northern industries have a heavier burden on their shoulders than do their white sisters. The old time prejudice of race makes their work doubly difficult; but they press on, being tried and less and less found wanting in skill and discipline. When enough colored workers are employed, then will come the pressure on white organizations that will make them say, with Michael Donnelley in 1900: "Every one who is working with us, be it man or woman, white or black, must be in the union; we stand or fall together."

The number of women working in the yards varies. In the early days of this century, it was estimated that there were from 500 to 1,000 women. Today (1927) the Packers' Report shows 2,428 women in all plants, as well as 1,725 in offices. The United States Woman's Bureau, in a 1924 bulletin, reports from seven establishments the total number of women as 2,022; of whom 1,302 are white, 720 colored. The total number of men and women is 16,314. According to the census and the packers' figures, there are about four times as many women employed now as were employed before the War, with a noticeable increase of colored men and women.

It was interesting to know what organized women think about and what they want. This was revealed in a limited way in a small conference where we all knew one another, which gave freedom to our expression. It was noticeable that all of their desires depended upon a better economic basis. The elder women frankly stated that they wanted more money to save for care in times of disability from sickness, accident or old age. Those who were members of strong unions felt easier concerning these future times of distress. They wanted money to give better care to members of their families; to help a younger brother or sister through high school or college, which these women had the ill fortune to miss. One worker said: "I should like enough to be generous on, to give something away; it's awful hard to skimp all of the time." One ambitious girl, with a good mind, longed for more education. One wanted to travel. "A room to myself" was the desire of a refined type of girl. The young ones, of course, wanted pretty clothes, and "enough of them." The pioneer women who, for the past century, worked and often suffered to secure the vote for women, held that emancipation meant not only political but economic freedom. To have women economically independent was devoutly hoped for by all who worked for woman's suffrage.

Today women have the vote and large numbers of them are nearing each day the goal of economic independence. There are nearly nine million women in gainful occupations; about five millions are wage-earners, three or four millions are professional and business women.

The wages during war time set a standard for women workers that will not be forgotten even in times of peace. I heard

from the French, English and American women that never again would they put up with the low wages which, before the War, had been considered "very good for women"--a phrase that is passing into oblivion.

In a small way, and at great waste, women are tasting the sweetness of independence in earning their own living and of sharing the economic burden of the family. Mrs. Van der Vaart found in her investigations into the working conditions of girls in Chicago that out of the five hundred investigated, four hundred were supporting not only themselves but others who were dependent upon them. One hundred supporting themselves were immigrant girls without family ties, who were compelled to pay board and thus indirectly supported others. (The woman who toils does not work simply for clothes.)

Every woman of the millions who have experienced the joy and dignity of carrying their own pocketbooks is a stepping stone towards the goal for which our brave leaders started years ago. We find ourselves disturbed when we try to fit these stepping stones into the mosaic of economic independence so much desired. We are not cheered when outsiders talk about equality of men and women in the economic field, for we know that at present there is no such equality, nor can it be attained by changing a word in the federal constitution. When men bear the children, care for the home making, and work for wages, all at the same time, then we can join the extreme feminists who are not willing to legislate for a short day for women unless, at the same time, they demand it for men. They do not realize that men have been organized for many years. With such long-time experience, the men will fight any effort to do for women by legislation what the men have shown they were able to do for themselves. Equality of opportunity by law will come for men and women through our states, without bringing chaos to those states that have on their statute books laws for the protection of unorganized women. Some of the best legal minds have told



Michael Donnelly
and Co-Workers

us that an amendment to the constitution will produce a chaotic condition in those states where laws have been passed in the interest of wage-earning women for the protection of their health. Doctor Alice Hamilton, in Bulletin 291 of the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, shows that the pregnant mother is extremely susceptible to carbon monoxide poisoning. She says: "While slight carbon monoxide poisoning in the mother may produce no symptoms striking enough to arouse attention, it may be quite enough to kill the child in utero, and such poisoning is probably fairly common in industries where women are employed and where the air is vitiated with carbon monoxide. Slow, gradual gassing undoubtedly causes much more severe, permanent damage than does quick gassing, even though the latter may bring on deep coma and convulsions, and seems for the time being much more serious. It is

the victims of slower gassing who are most likely to develop pneumonia, weakness of the heart, paralysis and mental disturbances, not the victims of sudden gassing."

There are national and state organizations of salaried and professional women who are not working in the interest of their less privileged sisters, but have the point of view of the manufacturers' associations, which hinders progressive legislation for the benefit of wage-earning women and children. In several states, these organizations have fought the progressive movement by preventing a shorter work-day law from passing. In my youthful years, Frances Power Cobbe, that early British suffragist of Irish birth and Irish vision who was an influence among thoughtful young women, warned us that when political emancipation came by law, we would be free as never before and tempted to self-centeredness and selfishness in our aims. Lately I have thought that it might be well, perhaps, to read that old book of the last century, The Duties of Women. The extreme feminists, because they do not know the human side of economics, and love the academic sound of "equality of opportunity," are not lending a hand to the young sisters in the grip of the industrial machine. It is a hard, uphill fight. Our own state of Illinois for nearly twenty-five years has been struggling to secure a shorter day's work for women.

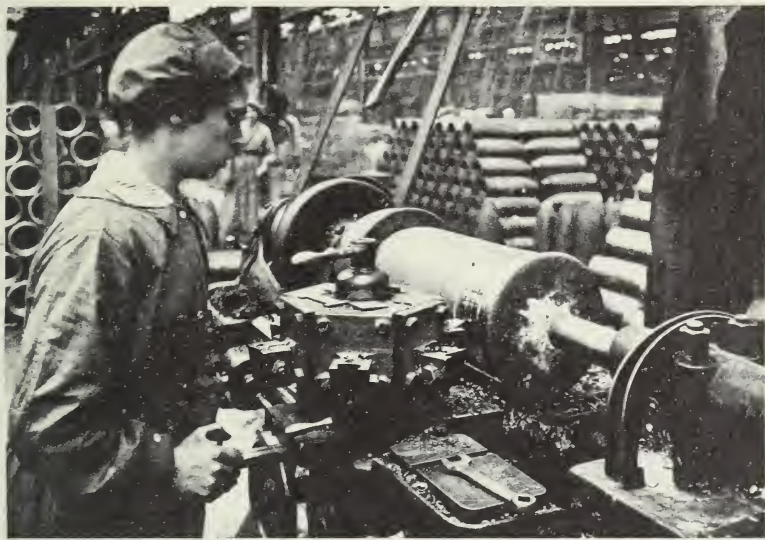
The first women's eight hour bill that was passed in Illinois was enacted during Governor Altgeld's administration in 1893 and was carried to the Illinois State Supreme Court and declared unconstitutional March 14, 1895. The Women's Ten Hour Law was passed in Illinois in 1909 and amended to include mercantile establishments in 1911. The first Supreme Court decision on the 1909 Ten Hour Law was given in 1910. What about it? About 1909, the Women's Trade Union League, backed by the state Federation of Labor, introduced into the Illinois Legislature a second bill for an eight hour day for women, but up to date it has not yet become a law.*

We would not, if we could, take from women their present opportunity to earn a living, but we must all of us work together for conditions that ennobles and do not debase the future mothers of the American working people.

In this day when no nation can live to itself, when all are bound together not only by trade, industry and commerce, but also by the subtler means of wireless, radio and electricity, we are compelled to set up international laws and standards for the safety of each and all of us the world around. Isolation is a word found useful by a few, but the men and women of affairs know that today no worker or capitalist can be an individualist and prosper. Each is bound up for weal or woe with every land in every clime. The International Labor Office of the League of Nations in its conference of all nations presented a program of standards in industry. These standards (the eight-hour day, or forty-eight hour week for men and women; no night work for women or young persons; protection for women employed in industry before and after childbirth) have been in the hands of all civilized governments since the first meeting in October of 1921, and each government has, in turn, discussed and accepted or

*It became a law in the summer of 1937.

simply endorsed them. Some day the conventions will become world laws for the protection of workers in industry. Some day the children of those workers, so often handicapped because born of worn-out mothers, will be assured of their normal birthright of health and vigor.



2. Turning the Copper Band of a 9.2-inch high-explosive Shell



3. Operating a multiple-spindle Drilling Machine: drilling Safety-pin Hole in Fuse

One of my valued men friends of the early days was Joseph Bauer, a German butcher, who had begun at eleven years of age to work on the "killing floor," and remained there until he was forty. He wielded a huge cleaver (very like a battle ax), but was a kindly, gentle soul. He loved to study history with E. O. Sisson, a young university student who later became a professor in the University at Portland, Oregon. Joseph Bauer always had ideals, and was not coarse or brutal. He said he could do his work automatically and not think about it. He was not a joiner, but loved to go home and spend his evenings with his family, put on his slippers, light his pipe, and read his church or foreign paper.

One day he came in as white as a sheet and said: "It's come upon me. I've been fired after working there since I was eleven--thrown out upon the scrap heap like a piece of old iron."

He had not merely been laid off for the convenience of the company as would happen now, but laid off for a younger man, because his arm trembled and he was not so accurate in hewing to the line down the back of the animal's neck.

"I had always believed," he said, "that when a man could not get or keep a job, he had only himself to blame. I shall never again get forty-five cents an hour!" And he never did, although they took him back on a variety of jobs. During the strike, he said to me, "Miss McDowell, the public will have to learn that Michael Donnelly represents as important interests as the packers."

Another friend was Michael Donnelly. He was one of the outstanding characters of my first ten years back of the Yards. Once he said to me: "Miss McDowell, when you find a real honest Irishman, you can't find a better man on earth"; and he himself was one of that type--born in Ireland of a mother who raised the finest chickens and ducks in her county, and a father who raised sheep. For fifteen years he was himself a sheep butcher. Michael was the man who organized for the union all departments of the Stockyards industry, down to the squeegee men who cleaned the floors. This was about 1900. Before that, the unions had come in from the outside; now the electricians had their own local, the butchers had theirs, etc. Michael had a hard time getting them organized, for their wives were against it. He made a house-to-house canvass, but they had to meet out on the prairies because they could not meet at homes or in any halls. When they became thoroughly organized, they went to the packers and said they did not want to have strikes, but to get along peaceably. This the packers did not seem to believe. They thought labor had to be downed once in so often. Other people anticipated trouble if they allowed laborers to get together, but no rioting ever occurred. Michael Donnelly was never afraid of his men, and was much beloved by them. One of his great efforts was a movement by the skilled laborers (about 40 per cent of the whole) to prevent the wages of the unskilled (about 60 per cent of the whole) from being cut. He persisted in his efforts to organize until there was an Amalgamated Meat Cutters Union in every packing-house in the country, with a total membership of 50,000. Michael Donnelly said: "This union is organized first for the education of its members, and then to grow strong enough

to ask in a dignified way for better wages, hours and conditions....There must be no aristocracy in the labor movement." By 1903 fifteen hundred of the three thousand workers had become members.

I think he is living still in some western city. He left Chicago a broken man because he had been twice slapped by his own men. They accused him of being bribed to leave. He was a victim of drink. His physician had told him he must stop or he would lose his mind. An injury over the eye, received in this slugging, had affected his brain. His is only one of the many tragedies of the Labor Movement unknown to the other side of life.

A test of brotherhood came in the summer of 1904, when, after weeks of conferences between packers and the union over the wage scale for both skilled and unskilled, a strike was called and 22,000 workers went out.

Hunger won it. For that many weeks many of the union element had only one square meal a day. There were few arrests. The violence was mostly in the press. Some of the police wanted to provoke a riot so that United States troops might be called out. They clubbed some people out of Davis Square once. Public opinion was on the side of the strikers, and the police was infuriated because of their non-resistance.

For the first ten days, all were out (about 22,000) and everything was quiet. Then the packers offered to settle, and Michael and his men agreed, although some of them said it would not be a true settlement. Michael begged the packers that the workers be allowed to go back in sections, for, if they went back all at one time there would be many mistakes. This was not granted. Armour let out all the leaders, but Swifts took all their men back. Some said they were discriminated against, and many sent letters and telegrams objecting to the settlement. "On with the strike!" was the slogan.

So it went on for four weeks longer, until they got hungry and desperate. I had one thousand cards printed (nobody knew who did it), signed by Michael Donnelly, calling upon the men to go fishing, or otherwise employ themselves, and maintain order. They did, until the last two weeks when the children hadn't enough to eat. Then it was that Clarence Buckingham sent us every day seventy gallons of milk, which was quickly consumed. One society lady wrote me: "Why don't you stop this strike? We haven't had a decent steak for a month."

Once I was in danger. A club missed my nose by about only a half-inch because I did not move on instantly when an important young policeman ordered me to do so.

Soon after that I went to Ogden Armour to try to get peace, but it was of no use. The packers were at that time determined to break the unions. However, Mr. Armour said I could come to see him whenever I wished.

The net result of the Great Strike was that the wages of the unskilled were reduced two and one-half cents, the pace-makers speeded them all up so that they did one-third more

for the money than before. The price of everything rose. Business in the vicinity became stagnant. Unionism was crushed.

Dr. Cornelia de Bey had a good deal of influence at that time. She was the daughter of a Dutch minister. She looked like a lady and dressed like a gentleman. She had a flair for the dramatic, and was able to frighten Mr. Armour by telling him that if she exposed what she knew the light of publicity would be turned on him. She said: "I have been in the packing-houses at night and seen men sleeping on the floors where the food of the world is being put up." She also flattered him by telling him that the whole world was looking to him.

J. Ogden Armour had always found the entire meat business repulsive, and had gone into it only because of his father. Dr. de Bey made the conditions seem more real to him. She asked him to see Michael Donnelly. Mr. Armour was willing (although he had said he would never do so), but wanted to see Donnelly alone. Through the doctor's influence, he saw me; but I said it would not do for him to see Michael Donnelly alone, for I knew his men would say Michael had sold them out. Mr. Armour did see Michael in company with Mr. Charles Smith, now a prosperous retail butcher in Oakland, California. To the two, Mr. Armour made important concessions: the skilled laborers were not to lose their two and one-half cents per hour--a cut had been proposed for both skilled and unskilled; and both classes were to return to work "with their (union) buttons on."

The men lost the thing they were fighting for, but they had made an arrangement that saved their self-respect.

There were some beneficial results from those weeks of struggle and privation on the part of the workers, for enough light was let in to show those in places of responsibility the existence of conditions they did not know about or at least did not realize. The press showed up the condition of the streets. The whole plant was whitewashed. Upton Sinclair's Jungle was one example of the "pitiless publicity" turned upon the Yards.

One day, soon after the strike was over, a young man asked to see me and handed me a letter of introduction. He said he had come to gather material for the Uncle Tom's Cabin of the Socialist movement, and I laughed at his sublime consciousness of power. For the next few weeks he came and went, asking his questions. The first edition of the Jungle sent to me was such unpleasant reading that I found it difficult to continue. It was filled with half-truths, mixed with original creations of characters. On the whole, it was an indictment of the industrial system's cruel ignorance of the human element so essential to its working. While The Jungle must have put into one period conditions which had been true fifteen years before, but which had been modified, yet so much remained of sanitary evils which this awful story revealed to the owners themselves that they were compelled later to reform radically.

Upton Sinclair did not, as he had hoped, change labor conditions, for the Jungle nauseated but did not convince America.

The nation's stomach was disturbed, but its conscience was left at ease. Legislation in the interest of sanitation was promoted, but labor was left as it had been. It took a strike of almost six weeks--with all its attendant publicity and this novel of unsavory proportions to reveal to those in power in the packing industry conditions they had not taken time from their balance sheets to discover.

It is only fair to remember the brief period in which the old-time slaughter houses had risen into an industry of marvellous specialization, using the most modern machinery that wasted nothing but the human stuff. Its mushroom growth was the only excuse one could offer for the conditions revealed by the strike and the Jungle.

The Jungle was epoch-making in that it began a campaign which ended in laws for inspecting the packing of meat and other food products.

Soon after this, I wrote a letter to President Theodore Roosevelt telling him of the organization of the Yards unions which had taken in all nationalities as well as negroes; I told him about the Poles who were accustomed to being deported to Siberia if they attempted to form unions, but could now express themselves in organizations here, and said I thought the education in self-government given by participation in unions was the very best way to prepare new Americans for citizenship. He appointed two special agents, Reynolds and Neill, in 1904, to come to Chicago and investigate to see if I were right. They made their report to the Bureau of Immigration in 1906, which may be seen by anyone.

This report was given in full in the daily papers of June 5, 1906. These two government agents, Neill and Reynolds, spent two and one-half weeks studying conditions in the yards. Their report filled almost a page of fine print in the daily papers. Accompanying it was Theodore Roosevelt's letter urging the immediate enactment by law of provisions that would enable the Department of Agriculture adequately to inspect meat and meat-food products entering into inter-state commerce and to supervise the methods of preparing the same and to prescribe the sanitary conditions under which the work should be done.

Michael Donnelly at once said he had known of these filthy conditions for a long time, and that they were just as bad in Kansas City and Omaha, but worse during a strike.

General Miles, then head of the army, said he had known of the conditions since the Spanish war.

The cattle interests were thoroughly angered, the medical profession aroused. American meats were condemned all over the world, beginning with London.

At that time, the packers contended, there were labor troubles about once in ten years. I can remember the strike of 1886, led by T. V. Powderly and the Knights of Labor, mainly against the ten-hour day. The Haymarket Riots were one outcome of this, but the public did not understand. Then there was the Pullman Strike of 1894, and the Great Strike

of 1904. In 1914, we were taken up with the outbreak of war in Europe. In 1916, the sheep butchers struck because a man was discharged for organizing unions. From 1916 to 1917, before we went into the war, they got two concessions, amounting to a raise in the wages of the unskilled from 17½ to 27½ cents per hour.

On November 1, 1917, the unions asked the packers for a conference. They got no reply. Packers began discharging a man a day. On Thanksgiving Eve, a strike vote was taken by all trades in the Yards--involving about 75,000 men, women and children making seventeen demands. The Federal Department of Labor asked the unions to wait until they could look into the situation. Gompers arranged a conference with Secretary Baker. The workers demanded that the government take over the Yards industry during the war. The packers were called to Washington for a conference. They were represented by Carl Meyer and J. J. Condon as attorneys; the unions by Frank R. Walsh and John Fitzpatrick.

When the time for the conference came, the Secretary of Labor was late in appearing. The two sides sat and looked at each other for an hour; then Fitzpatrick got up and went over to Mr. Armour, saying: "It's nonsense just to sit here looking at each other; I'm going to shake hands with you." Mr. Armour responded agreeably. The outcome of the conference was that Judge Alschuler, who had long been regarded as a friend of labor, was appointed arbitrator, both sides agreeing to abide his decision.

There was a long hearing which ended in March, 1917, with a six-hour speech by Frank R. Walsh in which he exposed the unfair methods of the packers. Then the government granted their main contentions, including the eight-hour day and back pay for several months.

This was carried out as much as anything ever is. To be sure, nothing had been gained that they strove for, but great things had been discovered in the plant. Conditions that were not touched before were completely made over. The press had let in the light upon physical conditions and they were made better. The fence about the Yards was a great improvement and kept the children from wandering in and out of the Yards for coal and wood. Every strike that fails brings to light many things that are not seen before. A new way of hiring labor was established. No longer the man who got a job had to pay for it in some way.

One of the meetings I shall never forget was held in Davis Square, the first time a union had ever dared to meet in the park. There were estimated to be 40,000 present. I was urged by some of my friends not to go, but I went. A Pole named Kilsudski, who was afterwards killed in the War, made a speech reminding them that President Wilson had granted them the eight-hour day and asking if they were willing to use part of their back pay to buy Liberty Bonds--"All who are willing to do so, raise your right hands!" En masse they took off their hats and raised their right hands. It had the solemnity of an oath of allegiance of these foreign born working-men to their country in time of war.

There was an important strike in 1921-22. On March 6, two days after Harding was inaugurated, when the government began to repudiate its meat contracts, the packers announced wages cut to 45 cents per hour for common labor and 12½ per cent for piece-work--that was a reduction of 7 cents per hour--to take effect March 14. It was also proposed to change the working day back to ten hours.

The unions urged Harding to intervene and compel the packers to sign another agreement, which they did.

But in June, 1921, they applied for a further reduction of 5 cents per hour, "to get back to normalcy." They thought labor was getting more than its share.

On November 17, 1921, a reduction from 45 to 37 cents per hour was granted, but keeping the eight-hour day.

Then in December a general strike was ordered throughout the packing industry, which lasted until January 31, 1922, but the papers took no notice of it. The leaders were black-listed from all the packing houses. Colored strike-breakers were introduced, the race issue was raised. One colored man was killed. (Cf. Independent, 57: 179 ff.). Again unionism was crushed.

The unions lost power after the depression. Many men are dissatisfied because they must pay their fees and get no benefits. They often discuss whether they should continue to belong. They naturally follow leaders, but there are no more Mike Donnelly's. They think their leaders have big salaries and can get elected by the same kind of corruption there is in politics. No doubt there are some racketeers in labor as in all else.

Jobs are difficult to secure now. A work guarantee was given some years ago that renders unions of little effect. Nevertheless, there seems to be much less dissatisfaction now than in former years--people are so glad to get jobs.

There is one story of the very early days that shows the humanity of the heads of the packing industries. Before the days of unions, when men had to go on killing cattle every day until all were killed, even though it took sixteen hours, they sent a group led by a Scotchman to see Mr. Armour. He said: "Mr. Armour, we've come to see you because we had to. We want you to know what we have to do. We come in the morning at seven o'clock. Sometimes we work two hours and sometimes sixteen hours. We bring our dinner but no supper. We don't have any supper. How would you like it yourself, Mr. Armour?" J. Ogden Armour replied: "I wouldn't like it at all. I didn't know it was like that and I'll attend to it right away." This early strike was settled without any further talk. The cattle butchers' union was assured and the day was given a certain length. A union member wrote me a letter describing the ending of the long day for the cattle butchers, for he "knew that I would be glad."

There has been but one strike recently among the live stock handlers, which was settled by the labor board of which President Hutchins was chairman.

CHAPTER V

THE STRUGGLE FOR AN AMERICAN STANDARD OF LIVING

By

Mary McDowell

THE AMERICAN standard of living is not fixed for any individual or class in America. There is a changing scale of values. Fashion sets it for some; culture and a longing for spiritual gifts set it for the few; but the understanding observer sees that underlying the material changing of standards there is a deep-seated longing for something better. Browning understood when he said: "All that I aspired to be and was not, comforts me."

This longing for better things runs through all society, but is more evident among the simpler folk who have so little to lose by failure and so much to gain by success in the struggle for a higher existence. The significance of the struggle of the packing-house workers in 1904, holding out for two and one-half cents an hour, was to the outsider a foolish, sordid fight for money; while we, who knew these workers as neighbors, saw in it the universal protest against hindrances to their idea of the American standard of living.

During the War I found in Europe the same mental confusion of one side of life when judging the actions of the other side. While in Paris and London studying the munition workers for the National Council of the Y.W.C.A., I was told in both cities, whenever I talked with ladies over a cup of tea, of the extravagances of these women who were wasting the high wages that they had never had before. They were buying, these ladies said, furs and jewelry and finery. The women who, as I knew, were making deadly munitions, were mostly young, and I supposed they would naturally buy those things that they had longed for and never before could secure for themselves. To get the truth concerning their reported foolishness, I turned to the welfare workers, and learned of the large purchases of liberty bonds and war stamps--of women buying bed linen, blankets and baby cabs, which never had been possible before, as they had never had their own pocketbooks prior to this wartime income. I met Mr. Seebohm Rowntree, a member of Parliament and a man of wealth, who knew the poor of York and London. I thought that his judgment would be valuable, therefore I put my question to him; and this was his answer to my query as to whether or not these women were extravagant.

"I will tell you a story," he said. "There came to the munition plant a lady from London to speak on thrift, and when she finished, she asked if anyone in the audience wished to speak. A young woman arose, and in her own characteristic language said: 'Yes, thrift is all right, it's a good thing to be savin', but I want to sye that until I got these wages my mother never saw a whole roast chicken in her life until I brought it home to her, and she's goin' to have whole roast chicken as long as I can buy 'em.' Then she continued: 'I always had to buy the cheapest blouses, but when I got these wages, I bought meself a silk blouse, and he came home on his furlough, and when he saw me he said:

"Maggie, what's the matter with ye? I never saw ye look like this afore!" And I want to say as long as he talks like that I'm goin' to buy silk blouses."

Mr. Rowntree then interpreted this story by saying: "This, to my mind, was not extravagance; it was only a higher standard of living."

I do not know how the economics text books define Standard of Living today, but to me it means a deep-seated longing for the fundamental necessities of life so that it is possible to go on and up. It varies somewhat with different nationalities, but there are always these desires in common -- enough to eat, privacy, ability to dress like other people; if possible, to own one's own place to live in; and, above all, to give the children a better education than their parents had. The early struggle is between this standard and the standards of peasants from Russia, Austria and Hungary.

Germans and Bohemians learn our ways most rapidly, for they bring with them no illiteracy. Swedes, too, are very quick, so quick that their young people do not want to remember or to keep the costumes of their native land which they were wearing a few months or even weeks before.

The unskilled workers from Europe have been my neighbors for so long a time that it is this group and their struggles that I am apt to consider when labor is under discussion. The average skilled crafts unions are prone to forget this growing labor force; yet we must concede to the skilled unionist American the credit of having developed in the mind of the average worker that concept called the "American Standard of Living."

I have seen that "Life is more than meat"; it is more than efficiency for bread-winning. In a country where the objective must be worthy citizenship, it is not enough to simply feed, clothe and shelter the human animal, or to keep the human being an efficient machine-cog for producing things. The American standard of living must allow for the growth of the soul. Personality in even the simplest folk is their divine right; but this right is not having its chance in our industrial and commercial life.

Leisure is another human right that is essential to the setting free of the faculties. A weary mind in a spent body is not ready after a day of uncreative labor to say with Walt Whitman, "I loaf and invite my soul." Moreover, the way man works or plays or is sheltered leaves an ineffaceable impression on his life. The effect of environment on the spirit of men was seen in a young man whom I knew to hold radical views. He thought he was an anarchistic socialist; he was bitter and critical of anyone like myself who did not see as he did. For several years he did not come to our house. When at last he came, I saw at once that he was a different person. He was well-dressed, looked healthy, and all bitterness seemed to have gone from his countenance and from his speech. I remarked on this very evident change of spirit, and asked him what had happened. "You don't scold me or call me a coward as you used to do; you look happy and well," said I. "Yes, I am," he replied. "Do you know why? We

have moved from that ugly Ghetto west, beyond Western Avenue. We have a flat that has sunshine in every room; we have room to move about; and we all have work. That's what's the matter with me!"

I could cite many other cases where a little more money was the lever that lifted a family to a higher grade of living. One large family, the mother of whom died just as the children began to add to the family income, was able to move out of a crowded, one-family cottage shared with another family. I met one of the children after the change. She was gay with laughter as she described their good fortune: "Oh, do come to see us living in a cottage all by ourselves!" This is the struggle from cramped poverty to human standards of living that is the life of the American poor. It is this struggle that is interpreted so dramatically by Nexø, the Danish writer, in his novel, *Pelle, the Conqueror*, a struggle from the animal to the human, so little understood by those whose life is above the economic level of mere existence.

Low wages generally mean high mortality. The Children's Bureau has shown that the chance to survive is several times less in a family with a small income than with an income large enough to afford a decent livelihood. In New Bedford, Massachusetts, among those earning less than \$450 a year, 20 out of every 100 babies born alive died before reaching their first birthday; while in a group earning \$1,250 or over, only 6 out of every 100 died under one year of age. These same general findings were obtained in similar investigations in other places.

Unemployment is another hindrance to the stabilizing of the standard of living. To a worker asking day after day for a job, unemployment means a lower standard. It means doubling up in the house, overcrowding, taking in boarders, moving into cheaper and less sanitary quarters. Clothing becomes shabby and is not replaced; the house in winter becomes cold, damp and unventilated; depression of spirits follows, also the suspicion by family and friends that the person out of work does not earnestly hunt for a job. One man said to me: "I can stand everything but to have my wife not believe in me; she says I don't look for work." Naturally loss of self-respect and of courage followed. The future could not be provided for. Therefore the ill effects of unemployment would go on, even after a job had been found.

Organization brings to the wage-earner a sense of dignity and self-respect. When men have the freedom to speak for themselves, when they may confer with their bosses on terms of equality, there comes to them a respect for their labor which is being dulled in the fierce industrial struggle of today.

The story of the procession of immigrants that has passed through Chicago during the last hundred years is very significant. The hard work of starting the infant industries and digging out the river was done by the Irish, who did not take up claims and work on the land as did the English settlers. After the Irish came Germans, and both lived in cheap little houses west of the River; but the Germans always ended by owning their own homes. After them came the

Bohemians and Poles, the latter controlling the common labor situation by 1894, when I went "back of the Yards." This brought labor antagonisms, and the young Poles went farther west as soon as they married. The older Poles remained. Bohemians always liked to own their own bit of land, with a few chickens and geese. Then came the Slavic races--Lithuanians, Hungarians, Russian Poles, Ukrainians, etc. The Italians still dig the sewers and do the worst jobs in the Yards.

Our neighbors from the first have been peasants from the fields of central Europe, mostly Poles, just as our ancestors were mostly farmers from England, Scotland and Ireland. The hundred per cent Englishman of that day was composed of as many different strains as the hundred per cent American of today. The old New York family was composed of Dutch, German, French, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, Russian and Swedish. Only about .80 per cent of us here in Chicago are of native-born parentage.

But what airs we did put on in the Ku Klux Klan period! How few of us realize that our ancestors were the immigrants of day before yesterday, and that most of them had not been financially successful in the Old Country! We all like to think they came for religious freedom, but they were looking for an economic chance too! My forebears stopped in New Jersey only until they could get a grant of land in Virginia.

One of our greatest regrets at the University of Chicago Settlement has always been that we could not follow up our neighbors in their own lives and in the lives of their children. As soon as they marry they move on. As old Heraclitus said: "We never dip our feet twice in the same stream."

My neighbors come from Europe with much the same desires as brought my ancestors, but they have been demoralized by the surroundings in which they have had to live and have been corrupted by our politicians. Politicians soon see the possibilities of newcomers and try to teach them their ideas of how to run city politics. They foster certain foreign newspapers to get the votes of those who cannot read English. It is all our own fault that after they get here they most admire the types of men who can get money without work. They used to admire the saloon-keeper--now it will be the tavern-keeper, I suppose.

In the years that prohibition was enforced, our neighborhood was a different place. Every settlement head will tell you the same thing. Lillian Wald was not a dry until she had tried prohibition; she became one when she saw the effects upon the whole life of her neighborhood and she worked against repeal. For repeal I do not blame the working people, although they did resent the fact that prohibition was enforced upon them and not upon the rich. Many grafters, of course, had great influence, but I blame society women who wanted to court popularity by serving expensive liquors. Some came to see me. They said the young people wanted it only because it was forbidden. I asked them if that were not true of all laws, especially when they were new, and if, therefore, all laws should be repealed?

Our boys' worker, who has been with us six years (1936), including a period before and after prohibition, knows the

young people and their sentiments. They talk freely to him. He has been able to keep our dances clean because they may be attended only by those who are members of the settlement and they know that as soon as a bottle begins to circulate the dance will be closed.

More wives have come to us for protection than have come since the very early days. Again the men get drunk on Saturdays and do not take their pay checks home. Some children come to be protected against drunken mothers. For a time one little boy came every day to ask: "Can you tell me where to find out who gives the drink to my mother?"

The highest standards of living for the American worker will be attained only after he becomes a partner and a real co-operator with his employer. For two months in the year 1904 50,000 packing-house workers were on strike in the interest of the unskilled workers, that they might keep their organization and retain the 17½ cents an hour won for them by their union. During those two months of waiting, I heard in Bohemian, Slavish and Lithuanian languages the same opinion expressed as that of a Polish worker, who spoke with the calmness of a firm conviction, as he said: "We can not bring up our children as Americans on fifteen cents an hour and forty hours a week. We can not live decently. Our wives, our children, our homes demand better wages."

The great task set for organized labor is to keep up this American standard of living, but by methods less wasteful than by strikes.

Industry in the future may have to add to the wage-earners' income something beyond just the necessities of the human animal for food, shelter, clothes; to these may have to be added recreation, more education, provision for the future. The haunting fear of dependency in times of sickness and old age must be dispelled. This fear is an ever-present horror that walks with the poor whose wages meet only the bare necessities of the animal nature. Perhaps society as a whole will have to decide that one side of life will have to sacrifice some luxuries in order that the other side may be free from this fear. The American standard of living is not fixed by the Department of Labor statistics. It is as changing as the desires of the citizens.

The question whether this fuller life has in it the elements of a higher and finer spiritual life for the children of the worker will have to be answered by society as a whole, for no side of life is independent of the others. It is almost as difficult to answer these questions as it was for the proverbial camel to go through the eye of the needle. Perhaps some day the needle will be enlarged to allow the rich man, with his brother, the poor man, to ride through together as partners, in harmony with Ruskin's theory that "There is no wealth but life."

CHAPTER VI

MARY MCDOWELL AND CHICAGO'S "I WILL" IN HOUSING

By

Elizabeth Hughes
Secretary, Committee on Housing,
Council of Social Agencies, 1935



HAVE A sort of personal formula for the way to promote a civilized life in the cities of our country," said Miss McDowell. "I believe we must have as the fundamental essentials of this civilized life for all the people, especially those of meagre incomes, sunshine, clean air, clean food, clean streets and alleys, homes that are more than shelters. Homes where sunshine, fresh air and space with a touch of beauty

are, where the children sleep in rooms apart from the adults. These essentials must become necessities in every city and every industrial community if we are to conserve the national health and morals of our family life."

The story of housing in Chicago is the story of the city's slow approach towards the ideal so clearly visioned by Mary McDowell. Almost from the earliest days Chicago had problems of housing, overcrowding and sanitation. Only towards the end of its first century, however, did the city come to recognize the close relationship between housing and well-being, and to assume some degree of responsibility for the living conditions of its citizens. The gradual development of community control of these matters in Chicago is typically American. The phases of community housekeeping first assumed by the city were the provision of an adequate and safe water supply, a sewer system, a system of waste disposal, streets and side-walks, and protection against fire. Next the community adopted minimum standards of living conditions by means of building ordinances and a sanitary code. Then between 1905 and 1908, a plan for the city was conceived and outlined. Since 1912, it has been the duty of the City Plan Commission to carry out this plan by recommending to the city authorities the order in which its different phases shall be undertaken. The plan was limited chiefly to a system of parks, boulevards, and schemes affecting the development of lake front, harbor and river. Housing was not considered or studied. But even with this omission the City Plan marks the beginning of systematic, long-time planning for the common good of all the citizens.

The next advance was about ten years later (1923), when the City Council passed a zoning ordinance and created the Chicago Zoning Commission. By the apportionment of land in the Zoning Ordinance, Industry and Commerce are destined eventually to absorb some of the deteriorated residential areas entirely. The ordinance allots somewhat less than half of the city's area to homes, roughly 4 per cent to one-family homes and 43 per cent for apartment buildings. More square miles are given for the erection of two-family apartments than for large apartment buildings and hotel apartments. Thus, by permitting the absorption of blighted areas by com-



Federal Street in 1925

merce and industry, and by regulating the density of population in residential areas through specifying the type of dwellings, the Zoning Ordinance definitely affects the housing that Chicago will eventually possess.

Up to this point, however, Chicago's control over housing is expressed only in restricting legislation forbidding the erection of buildings which fail to meet the minimum standards set in the building ordinances and the sanitary code, or which violate the provisions of the zoning ordinance.

The appointment of the Chicago Housing Commission by Mayor Dever in 1926 at the urgent request of Mary McDowell may be regarded as the first step towards a constructive housing policy in Chicago under which local, state and federal authorities are now working together to improve housing conditions. Mary McDowell, then Commissioner of Public Welfare, wrote the mayor as follows: "We are told by authorities that 75 per cent of the population of the United States earn their living with their hands....Chicago, I feel sure, can match this fact in her unskilled working group, for small wage families make up the greater part of Chicago's population. Housing is so fundamental to the well-being of these families and has so much to do with their moral life as well, that we believe it becomes the duty of the city to see that Chicago's "I WILL" is set upon this measure. It is quite as important as any that presents itself to the administration. Should it not be added to any plan for a city beautiful or city zoning?

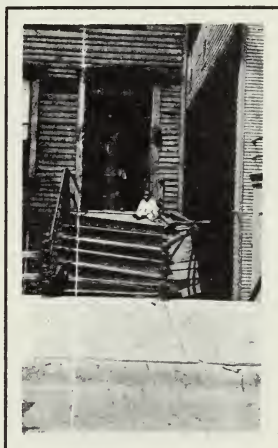
"The job seems to us big enough, important enough and pressing enough for commerce and even real estate to organize a Housing Commission to do something for those who are necessarily and essentially part of the successful economic life of our city. Can we, I wonder, truthfully call our city great until these housing conditions reported in the following study are changed?"

Mary McDowell utilized the findings of the survey in an all-day housing conference on April 16, 1926, at which the city's needs and problems were discussed by housing experts and others. The conference adopted the following resolution:

"Whereas, the greater proportion of Chicago's families cannot afford monthly rentals in excess of \$40 and \$45, and very many must have rentals under \$30 or even under \$20; and

"whereas, other cities with similar housing problems have demonstrated ways of improving their housing situations and are approaching a solution; therefore

"Be it Resolved, that the mayor of the city be asked to create a housing commission on which shall be represented the main factors of the housing industry--finance, real estate, city planning, architecture, contracting, labor, house-furnishings,



real estate management and household operation, as well as public-spirited individuals and organizations, city officials, industrial enterprises and civic bodies.' This commission to consider continued interest in and study of the problem and to take steps to provide decent American-standard housing for small-wage families in this community."

The creation of the Chicago Housing Commission of forty-two members, men and women, representing these various interests soon followed. Service upon the Commission was voluntary, and no appropriation was made for its use. Although it had a brief existence because of a change in city administration, the work of the commission undoubtedly prepared the way for the passage of the State Housing Act in 1933.

This act recognized the public menace of existing housing evils, declaring that for the correction of these conditions it was necessary "to encourage the gradual demolition of existing unsanitary and unsafe housing and the construction of new housing facilities under public supervision, with proper standards for sanitation and safety, and at a cost which will permit monthly rentals or charges which wage-earners can afford to pay."

The Act creates a State Housing Board for the supervision and control of all housing corporations of a limited dividend character that may be formed in accordance with its provisions.

Meanwhile, the Federal Government began in 1922, through loans and grants, to offer encouragement to local efforts in slum clearance and low cost housing. Federal loans were available only to limited dividend corporations such as the State Housing Act in Illinois authorized. In 1934, a bill was passed in special session to give Illinois public corporate bodies known as housing authorities power "to acquire property, to borrow, expend and repay moneys" used in low cost housing and slum clearance projects. Under this act the State Housing Board determines the need for creating a housing authority and passes upon the appointments made by the authority of the local official responsible. In 1937 a housing authority for Chicago appointed by Mayor Kelly and approved by the State Housing Board to which three demonstration projects, planned and executed by the Public Works Administration, with accommodations for 2,154 families, have been turned over--the Jane Addams and Julia Lathrop Houses, and the Trumbull Park Housing Project.



Housing as a matter of public concern has to do with the homes of those whose incomes are so low that they cannot make their needs and demands effective through ordinary business channels. It has been estimated that three out of five of the families in large cities always live in cast-off buildings--that is, in old structures erected to meet the demands of other

groups at other times. Because of the size of the city alone, the matter of housing is a continuing problem in Chicago. It is important, therefore, that it be attacked from every possible angle by both public and private agencies.

In an American community, continued effort through official channels depends greatly upon public opinion and interest. Long years of effort on the part of many individuals, groups and organizations had to precede such legislative controls as are thrown around urban living conditions today. This struggle for improvement in Chicago as elsewhere was led by groups and individuals who were not themselves the intimate sufferers from bad housing--that is, it was done by crusaders for a cause, not by those who were victims of the evil. Mary McDowell was one of those crusaders.

As head resident of a settlement house "back of the Yards," she had close personal contact with workers and their families living under the same neighborhood conditions as herself. Seeing first one nationality and then another strive to make homes and to rear children in old houses growing older, more obsolete and worn out, she became more and more convinced of the effect of housing on human beings, more and more appreciative of environment as an influence in Americanization and democracy. Nor did she fail to consider the economic side of the question. For thirty years or more she observed, studied and thought about housing as a social question and worked out its inter-relationships to the other major interests of her long life. At first hand she gathered information from England and the countries of Europe and watched critically and sympathetically attempts made in our own cities. During four short years as Commissioner of Public Welfare she was able to add to her wide influence as a private citizen the weight of a public official entrusted with the duty of collecting information and data relating to actual living conditions in Chicago."

Shelter must be put on the same economic basis as are all sanitary necessities, for those whose incomes are under \$2,000, who cannot pay for sunshine, fresh air and space in their housing. "If we really want to eliminate rotting slums, this new kind of economics must be worked out on our cities' housing plans....For the city is not only a legal community; it is a living community and its human output is of greater value than its material."

To bring this change about she believed: "What is needed today are social politicians who think in terms of human betterment, who are as clever as the great captains of industry in the power of organization, who use their genius in projects for housing the wage earners of small wages and large families."

She had faith that housing was a "piece of work as fine and beautiful as anything that can interest our men and women who only need to care in order to become responsible."

As to procedure, she advocated: "First get your ideals, then your plans, then the economic base"; in other words, get goals towards which to work and progress as rapidly toward them as the public purse will permit. She held that experience and experiments elsewhere would prove valuable to Chicago in getting under way, for though "Chicago cannot copy New York or England, she can learn certain principles from other places if she is not too provincial." "Chicago needs homes that may be purchased, she needs homes that may be rented, single or in apartment houses for people of small means." An immediate need which she saw was "to make over well-built, still worthy, one-family homes on the crowded South Side into sanitary and comfortable houses for several families." Housing was one highly important way "to make the future of American democracy sure and safe."

A non-official body, the Metropolitan Housing Council, formed in 1933 to bring together commercial, professional and social groups "in order to achieve a common understanding of the housing problem and to study ways and means of solving it," has taken on the important tasks of education and interpretation by which public interest is kept alive and public opinion is slowly formed and given intelligent purpose.

In all these progressive efforts towards better housing conditions in Chicago, Mary McDowell's influence can be clearly traced. Her practical yet prophetic vision of the "fundamental essentials of civilized life for all the people" will be realized as rapidly as Chicago's "I Will" sets itself to the task.

CHAPTER VII

CHILD WELFARE

By

Hasseltine Byrd Taylor

Division of Social Work, Northwestern University, and
Chairman, Department of Government and Child Welfare,
Illinois League of Women Voters



During the more than forty years of Mary E. McDowell's active career in social service, many developments took place in the field of child welfare. Exclusive of the juvenile court movement and the extension of public education with compulsory attendance requirements which are treated elsewhere in this tribute, four movements have affected large numbers of children. They are the prohibition, limitation, and regulation of child labor; the maternal and child health programs for the reduction of infant and maternal mortality and for the protection of child health; the mothers' aid movement; and the movement toward the co-ordination of state and local public welfare organization. More adequate and detailed reports of these developments than this article would permit are readily available elsewhere. Therefore, instead of reviewing them here, a statement of the Committee on Child-Saving of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections of 1896 will be presented and contrasted with the Children's Charter to which the delegates of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection of 1930 pledged themselves.

While it will be evident that the two selections are not altogether comparable, it will also be evident that without the devoted and intelligent leadership of Mary E. McDowell and others with whom she was associated during the intervening years, the latter selection could scarcely have been drafted, much less represent attainable standards to which workers in the field of child welfare now stand committed. The first is a plan for each or any state to supplement and strengthen the work of private and sectarian charities for children. The latter is an expression of national standards toward which all the states, together with the national government, are working. The first is directed toward those children who were soon to be described in juvenile court acts as "dependent, neglected, and delinquent." The latter is directed toward all children, indicating a recognition of

social responsibility for meeting the needs of childhood rather than what to do with those children who had become public charges because of the limitations of private and sectarian charities.

THE RESCUE AND RELIEF OF CHILDREN*

Outline for an Ideal System

Extracts from the Report of the Committee on Child-Saving

Before undertaking to say precisely what should be done in any place for the accomplishment of any work of importance touching the welfare of a community, one must know what has already been done, what further is required, how far the work of the past may be utilized as foundation for that of the future, what resources are at command, and to what extent the persons compassing that community can be interested and brought into co-operation....The accomplishments of today, criticized, found wanting, and abandoned, as they soon must be, were once the rosy ideals of a future....

The field of our ideal system must be all-embracing. There must be no minimum age below which it will fail to operate; and the maximum must be as elastic as the lines between childish innocence, guilty knowledge, and criminal responsibility. It must have in it large elements of public authority....Poverty alone will not always justify the permanent disintegration of that primary social unit, the family.

In an ideal system, churches or religious orders and associations of citizens will organize undertakings for the relief and care of children. These they will administer through their own officers, for their own purposes, and at their own expense. The State will lend them the protection of laws of incorporation, and otherwise encourage and approve their work, demanding only that the children who are so soon to be its citizens shall be supplied with the things necessary to their moral and physical welfare, and furnishing to the contributing public a guarantee that upon the withholding of these things shall come the dissolution of the corporation and the withdrawal of permission to receive or retain children.

The resources which churches and associations of citizens can devote to the care of children are insufficient to meet the needs of the great centres of population. Neither is it fair that the whole expense of the care of children should be drawn from individuals or associations willing to contribute....The State will exercise its authority, and draw upon its resources of patriotism and money. It will provide, in the first place, a body of citizens, each of whom has some leisure which he is willing to devote to work established by legislative enactment, who will accept a governmental appointment upon a child-caring commission, and who will be a strong factor in the upbuilding of an authoritative and yet conservative system. The members of this commission will be appointed by the exercise of public authority, and will be removable for cause. Their terms of office will be arranged to expire at considerable intervals, to

*Proceedings of the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, Grand Rapids, 1896, pp. 314-318.

avoid sudden and violent changes in membership and policy, and their duties clearly set forth by statutory enactments.

It will be the duty of such a commission to entertain all reports on behalf of children supposed to be in any such condition as makes necessary or desirable the intervention of public authority; through appropriate local representatives....to make searching examinations into the facts of all such cases, and to present before the courts of justice designated for the purpose, for further and more authoritative examination, all children apparently in need of public care or for whom no other adequate provision is offered. There will be separate courts for the hearing of such cases.The decrees of such courts will give into the keeping of the child-caring commission, created by the State, all children whose necessities demand such guardianship. These decrees will be absolute for the time being, but recoverable in any instance by the same or a higher court, upon presentation of new evidence of a nature different from that upon which the original finding was based.

Having assumed charge of children in obedience to orders of the court having authority to commit, the child-caring commission will, through an expert superintendent, at once decide what is to be the situation of such children for the immediate future.....

There will be no hard and fast rules laid down for the government of cases wherein municipal or statutory laws have been disregarded by children. Such children will be committed to the care of experts whose life-work and profession it is to decide what should be done in each case dealt with. Such will be at once released on parole, returning to their former homes. Some will be deported to distant family homes and carefully and judiciously guided into better ways; and some will go at once to reformatory institutions, where they will learn, under more or less hard conditions, those lessons of industry, personal honor, and self-control which alone will enable them to use wisely the larger liberty to which they will by and by be restored.

Thus will private charity and church philanthropy remain untouched by officialism, except in so far as may be necessary for the protection of the children. Thus will be sharply drawn, and not crossed, the line between the duty of the church or the private association and the duty of the State. Thus will parental rights be sacredly guarded and parental neglect adequately and promptly dealt with. Thus will be removed the temptation of weak and vacillating parents to relinquish to public care children for whom they should provide at home, the burden of the support of children at the expense other than their parents will not unduly increase; and yet it will be made certain that no little child need long remain subjected to physical abuse, moral contamination, or hurtful poverty. Thus will be removed the bars to the progress of those fit to become great. The tolerably good and the tolerably bad will find tolerable conditions, and thus will the melancholy residuum find its appropriate level, and cease to bring forth its kind.

Herbert W. Lewis C. D. Randall
Stanley C. Griffin J. J. Kelso

Since 1896 the age of criminal responsibility has been actually or practically raised in most of the states. The guardianship procedure has replaced the criminal law procedure formerly used. Public authority is used for the protection of children and this public authority is charged with the finding and doing of that which is best for the individual child. Instead of "poverty alone will not always justify the permanent disintegration of that primary social unit, the family," it would be said today that poverty alone will never justify the separation of members of a family group. No more is it thought necessary for "such parent being placed, without expense to the State, in a position to control and provide for his or her child" in order to retain custody when dependence has brought the child to the attention of the court or other agency.

During the intervening years, state laws have raised the ages below which children may be employed for wages, have prohibited the labor of older children during school hours and at night, and have prohibited still older children from working in especially hazardous occupations. Congress passed a child labor law which was declared unconstitutional. It passed another which was also declared unconstitutional. An Amendment is now before the states for ratification which will remove constitutional limitations on the federal government in regulating the labor of children and young persons. Twenty-eight states have ratified this Amendment. Methods of certification and inspection have been devised. Health and educational requirements have been established as prerequisite for work certificates. Employers in some states have been deterred from illegally employing minors by imposed double indemnity in case of injury.

Under the leadership of the United States Children's Bureau, which was created in 1912, the birth-registration area has been made nation-wide. Likewise under its leadership a maternity and infant hygiene program was carried on between 1921 and 1929. This program resulted in a notable reduction in infant mortality. Now under the Social Security Act, financial assistance from the federal government is again available to the states for maternal and child health work.

The Mothers' Aid movement, which found its first expression in state laws in 1911, soon spread to almost all the states. These laws were designed to make possible the continuousness of family life despite the death or incapacity of the chief wage-earner, to prevent that poverty which often resulted in the placement of normal children in institutions. Today, Aid to Dependent Children under the Social Security Act is liberalizing mothers' aid laws to include dependent children with near relations as well as children with their mothers, is requiring state laws to be mandatory instead of permissive in all the counties, is bringing federal grants-in-aid to assist the states in giving this aid.

Through the movement to co-ordinate state and local welfare activities, the leadership and the wider resources of the state are being brought to the local welfare units. One group after another has been removed from the pauper classification and is now being provided for through aid to the blind, dependent children and the aged. These several forms of assistance are being administered by county or district

departments with state and federal aid rather than by township overseers of the poor. Home relief standards have been raised in many places. This movement is leading toward a guarantee of minimum standards for family life, which means better care for children where care can best be provided--that is, in their own homes.

These things have not just happened. They are the result of tireless, continuous efforts made by persons devoted to the welfare of children. Mary E. McDowell was one of them. In her own neighborhood "back of the yards" she sought to improve conditions through better enforcement of health regulation, through better administration of municipal services, through co-operation with school attendance officers and factory inspectors. Beyond her neighborhood boundaries, she joined her strength and devotion to that of others to improve the standards of protection and care of children. The Children's Charter stands in great contrast to the statement of 1896. It is testimony of the work in behalf of children during the intervening years. And, as Mary McDowell would do, it reminds us of what must yet be done if the needs of children are to be adequately met.

THE CHILDREN'S CHARTER*

- I. For every child spiritual and moral training to help him to stand firm under the pressure of life.
- II. For every child understanding and the guarding of his personality as his most precious right.
- III. For every child a home and that love and security which a home provides; and for that child who must receive foster care, the nearest substitute for his own home.
- IV. For every child full preparation for his birth, his mother receiving prenatal, natal, and postnatal care; and the establishment of such protective measures as will make child-bearing safer.
- V. For every child health protection from birth through adolescence, including: periodical health examinations and, where needed, care of specialists and hospital treatment; regular dental examinations and care of the teeth; protective and preventive measures against communicable diseases; the insuring of pure food, pure milk, and pure water.
- VI. For every child from birth through adolescence, promotion of health, including health instruction and a health program, wholesome physical and mental recreation, with teachers and leaders adequately trained.
- VII. For every child a dwelling-place safe, sanitary, and wholesome, with reasonable provisions for privacy; free from conditions which tend to thwart his development; and a home environment harmonious and enriching.
- VIII. For every child a school which is safe from hazards, sanitary, properly equipped, lighted, and ventilated.
 - * For younger children nursery schools and kindergartens to supplement home care.

*White House Conference on Child Health and Protection, 1930. The Century Co., pp. 46-48.

- IX. For every child a community which recognizes and plans for his needs, protects him against physical dangers, moral hazards, and disease; provides him with safe and wholesome places for play and recreation; and makes provision for his cultural and social needs.
- X. For every child an education which, through the discovery and development of his individual abilities, prepares him for life; and through training and vocational guidance prepares him for a living which will yield him the maximum of satisfaction.
- XI. For every child such teaching and training as will prepare him for successful parenthood, home-making, and the rights of citizenship; and, for parents, supplementary training to fit them to deal wisely with the problems of parenthood.
- XII. For every child education for safety and protection against accidents to which modern conditions subject him--those to which he is directly exposed and those which, through loss or maiming of his parents, affect him indirectly.
- XIII. For every child who is blind, deaf, crippled, or otherwise physically handicapped, and for the child who is mentally handicapped, such measures as will early discover and diagnose his handicap, provide care and treatment, and so train him that he may become an asset to society rather than a liability. Expenses of these services should be borne publicly where they cannot be privately met.
- XIV. For every child who is in conflict with society the right to be dealt with intelligently as society's charge, not society's outcast; with the home, the school, the church, the court, and the institution when needed, shaped to return him whenever possible to the normal stream of life.
- XV. For every child the right to grow up in a family with an adequate standard of living and the security of a stable income as the surest safeguard against social handicaps.
- XVI. For every child protection against labor that stunts growth, either physical or mental, that limits education, that deprives children of the right of comradeship, of play, and of joy.
- XVII. For every rural child as satisfactory schooling and health services as for the city child, and an extension to rural families of social, recreational, and cultural facilities.
- XVIII. To supplement the home and the school in the training of youth, and to return to them those interests of which modern life tends to cheat children, every stimulation and encouragement should be given to the extension and development of the voluntary youth organizations.
- XIX. To make everywhere available these minimum protections of the health and welfare of children, there should be a district, county, or community organization for health, education, and welfare, with full-time officials, co-ordinating with a state-wide program which will be responsive to a nation-wide service of general information, statistics, and scientific research. This should include:
- (a) Trained, full-time public health official,

with public health nurses, sanitary inspection, and laboratory workers;

(b) Available hospital beds;

(c) Full-time public welfare service for the relief, aid, and guidance of children in special need due to poverty, misfortune, or behavior difficulties, and for the protection of children from abuse, neglect, exploitation, or moral hazard.

FOR EVERY CHILD THESE RIGHTS, REGARDLESS OF RACE, OR COLOR, OR SITUATION, WHEREVER HE MAY LIVE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG.

CHAPTER VIII

POLITICS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF CHICAGO

Foreword by
Caroline M. Hill

Education, like other institutions, moves in cycles. Periods of stagnation have been followed by spurts of growth. In the great epochs of its history, leaders have arisen who visualized larger opportunities for the children of all classes. Pestalozzi's aim was "to teach beggars to live like men," Herbert Spencer's ideal was complete living for every human being.

The period preceding the last ten years of the nineteenth century was educationally decadent. Education was coming to be regarded by some as a class distinction, by others as a means of making money. The curriculum had grown rigid and academic, there was little connection between the public schools and the world outside. The schools did not know how to provide for the education of the whole child. The mechanical repetition of lessons learned by rote tended to develop only verbal memory at the expense of an intelligent grasp of the subject. Many children who were not "book-minded" saw no use in what they were being taught.*

Then came the new psychology showing the locations of the different functions in specific areas of the brain, proving that the use of the body is necessary to brain growth and development. This created a demand for more activity in schools.

In the decade 1890-1900, when the settlements began to "pioneer on social frontiers," the New Education was developing. In 1896 the laboratory school of the University of Chicago was started by its Department of Education. The educational concepts of Colonel Parker, John Dewey and Jane Addams were almost identical. Settlements began to offer courses in manual training, cooking, metal moulding, music, painting, and modeling, wherever teachers trained in those subjects could be found--usually to teach for nothing. The University of Chicago Settlement offered more and more of these subjects, to supplement the work of the public schools. One of the outstanding examples was a children's chorus of 200 voices trained by Marie Hofer (a descendant of the Tyrolese patriot, Andreas Hofer), using herself the methods of Dr. Tomlins, a remarkable teacher who had led the Apollo Club for thirty years.

In the summer of 1895 Mary McDowell was able to secure from the Daily News a donation of \$1,000 to open the first vacation school in the Seward School building for children of the neighborhood who were unable to get out of town in the summer. In the fall of 1895 a mass-meeting of parents and teachers was held in this school and a petition circulated for the introduction of manual training into the regular school work. Almost at once the Seward School was made a manual training center by the Board of Education.

*See Gertrude Howe Britton's Study of Truancy (1906).

John Dewey said the settlements were presenting the same ideas, sugar-coated, that he was trying to get into the school curriculum. From about 1895 to 1905 the school systems of the whole country were being vitalized by his slogan "Education is not a preparation for life, Education is life." The movement for the education of the whole child was then called by its opponents the introduction of "fads and frills," but it convinced the patrons of the schools and was adopted until the "Economy Program" of the present Board of Education swept some of the most important features out of the system. (See following chapter by Mrs. Simpson.)

The furore against "fads and frills" which has been engendered by supporters of the present Board of Education is strangely reminiscent of the clamor which met the earlier attempts to introduce some of these features. But the outcry is slowly subsiding. Public pressure, led by the Citizens' Schools Committee, has proved too strong for the frugal instincts of the board members. There is reason to hope that in time many of the progressive features in operation before the appointment of the present school board will be restored to the schools. If we can forget the loss to the children and the confusion and dismay of the teachers during the last four years, we may feel some encouragement about the future of our schools. But the sinister shadow of political appointments to the teaching force still hangs over the educational horizon.

POLITICS IN THE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

Mabel P. Simpson
Executive Secretary, Citizens' Schools Committee



The Spoils System

THE CITY of Mary McDowell has sold its public schools for a mess of jobs and contracts. Since 1933 or thereabouts, the political machine has had all power in Chicago--power to reduce the city council to a state of pitiful servitude, power to pull down the level of the judiciary, power to take possession of the legislature in violation of every rule until the governor interfered in the cause of civic decency. Even the schools have come to be considered a legitimate part of the spoils of victory. While other political machines have used the school system to some extent, particularly the business department, as a landing place for political workers, no other school board has so manipulated educational policies as has the present board. Only its one woman member, Mrs. W. S. Hefferan, shows any comprehension of the educational problems of the schools--the attention of the other members of the board being confined to the jobs and contracts which the operation of the 400 school buildings provides. Mrs. Hefferan was appointed by a previous administration and was reappointed only because of the public demand which expressed itself in a great petition of 27,000 names sponsored by the Citizens' Schools Committee.

Francis W. Parker Brought Progressive Features into the System

In the fifty years prior to 1895, including and following the work of Francis Parker, progressive services were gradually placed in the schools--personnel workers, deans for boys and girls, vocational advisers. Swimming pools were built, bands, orchestras, and special-interest clubs were organized. Shops were installed and manual training and household arts classes were organized in the upper elementary grades to add value and interest to the school life of boys and girls who are not academically inclined. Special schools were developed to care for crippled children and to prevent the problem boy from becoming delinquent. It was Colonel Parker himself who established the first manual training shop in the basement of a public elementary school in Chicago, and he furnished the tools and benches with money from his own pocket. In his own Normal Demonstration School in Englewood the first special teachers of music, art, science, literature and physical education were installed. He searched the country for those who could inspire students in the various fields of knowledge and induced them to think for themselves.

Chicago's public school superintendents have always worked under political pressure. So unbearable was their persecution that several of them died in office and most of the

rest left the Chicago System crushed in spirit. The schools continued to function with a relatively high degree of efficiency only because of the devotion of the teachers to their own high standards of accomplishment.

Mayor Kelly's School Board Wrecked the School System in 1933

In July, 1933, the School Board, two members of which had been on the board only five days, and five members of which, including the president, had been in authority only seven weeks, put through a so-called "economy" plan, which will go down in history as the "wrecking plan" of Chicago's schools. They voted it in twenty minutes on a hot afternoon in a board meeting three and one-half hours late. They voted it without consulting the Superintendent of Schools. They voted it over Mrs. Hefferan's protest, with the evident previous agreement of all the other members. By its provision the school system was changed almost beyond recognition. Gone were the progressive features dear to the hearts of Francis Parker and his colleagues and successors. One-tenth of the teachers were temporarily dismissed from the system. Gone were manual training and household arts teachers from the grades. Gone were half the kindergarten teachers. (It was decreed that one teacher instead of two should manage each kindergarten, and a year later over half of the teachers remaining had a daily load of over one hundred five-year old children.) Gone were the physical education teachers for elementary schools. (Physical education could not be abolished as planned because it was protected by law.) So the work was done by assistant principals, music teachers, fifth grade teachers, or anybody who happened to be handy!

Gone were the deans and vocational advisers out of high schools. Gone was Crane, our one Junior College. Gone were the Junior High Schools which Dr. Strayer of Columbia University, in a survey which cost the preceding Board of Education \$100,000, termed the bright spot of the Chicago school system. The deans, vocational advisers and college teachers were sent to teach regular high-school subjects, in which many of them had no special training or interest. The junior high-school teachers were sent either to high schools or to elementary schools, according to their certificates.

Gone were the elementary school principals from half the schools. The politicians could see no reason why an administrator could not spend part time in each of two schools or more. The demoted principals were also sent to high schools to teach, in many instances, subjects for which neither their training nor experience fitted them.

The effect upon the children and youth of Chicago of the general turmoil which ensued cannot be estimated except in terms of morale and of educational losses which can never be replaced. Even in dollars and cents the politicians have made no effort to prove that they saved the large amount of money of which they boasted. Sheer necessity, and the citizen interest which organized under the ringing demand, "Save Our Schools" in 1933, have brought back one principal to a school. Three junior colleges, housing about the same number of students which Crane cared for, have been organized.

By September, 1935, all of the 1,300 teachers dismissed from the system were re-assigned. In the mean time they were forced to take a course at Chicago Normal College to secure general certificates instead of the special certificate which they held before the political hurricane of 1933. The Normal course, while probably helpful in many instances, was generally very embarrassing to the teachers who were forced to teach the classes, and a very great annoyance to the teachers who were forced to attend as students. Some of the latter had Master's degrees and had taught for as many as twenty years.

Superintendent Bogan Stood in the Breach, Until His Death

William J. Bogan, admittedly a man of highest educational standards, was superintendent of schools in 1933. After the wrecking program was put through, without his knowledge or approval, he offered a counter-proposal which would save money but would have a much less deadly effect upon the system. The politicians ignored his proposal. As time went on the pressure increased until the superintendent was unable to make even minor decisions for the good of the system, and was forced to do many things contrary to his judgment as an educator. He saw men appointed as his assistants whose standards fell far short of his idea of professional leadership. He protested particularly against the appointment of a favorite of the board as Assistant Superintendent, in charge of high schools--only to be told that his job was at stake if he refused to accept the board's choice. His health had already broken under the strain. In March, 1936, he gave up the struggle. The Daily News paid him a tribute when it said, editorially:

"He Died in the Breach"

"For months it had been known that the puppet school board was planning to get rid of this man who would not, like itself, play a puppet role and dance to the pulling of strings by the city hall. The board was spared that trouble, the city that disgrace.

"The people are thus confronted once more with a crisis in the public school system. While Bogan lived he stood in the breach. He could not hold it against all invaders, but he blocked and lessened the harm done by others.

"Now the breach is wide open."

Citizens Break with the New Superintendent after One Year

Mr. Bogan told a friend shortly before his death that the politicians had a man ready for his job. He warned this friend that the schools would be attacked at the point of examinations--and that in a short time only those people who are friends of the ward committeeman or some other politician will get the teaching positions. "When that happend," said Mr. Bogan, "we are through." Subsequent events showed how ominous was the prediction.

An examination for principalships had been announced for April, 1936, but was postponed without satisfactory reason. In September, 1936, the examination was given to more than eight hundred applicants. For the first time in Chicago's school history people from outside the system were called in to grade the written part of the examination. Some of the University professors who served in this capacity say that the feeling prevailed that they were a front for something, they knew not what. Dr. William H. Johnson, who succeeded Mr. Bogan as Superintendent over the protest of many civic organizations, made it clear that the oral examination would be the deciding factor. The oral test would be given to those who made an average of 73.5 on the written work and whose preparation and experience were satisfactory. The oral examination would pass on personality, appearance and general adaptability.

The Board of Examiners (the Superintendent and two others recommended by him), plus the Assistant Superintendent and the district superintendents, comprised the oral board. After it was all over, the list of 155 successful applicants was published. Some teachers generally considered to be outstanding as to both training and personality failed to pass. Political names stood out in the list for any informed person to see. Investigation revealed that most of the successful ones had political connections.

Moreover, by an unofficial survey of the 155 who passed the examination, about 120 had been students in Mr. Johnson's preparatory classes at Loyola University.

Citizens Unite to Defend the Schools

The Citizens' Schools Committee, outgrowth of the "Save Our Schools" uprising of 1933, publicly broke with the superintendent after the results of the examination were announced. Since Mr. Bogan's death the assignment of teachers through the merit system has been violated to an unprecedented extent. Teachers have been given positions without examinations, on temporary certificates, renewable just as are temporary certificates in the city hall or sanitary district. Some of the persons holding these temporary certificates are not eligible even to take a teacher's examination. Yet the Federation of Women High School Teachers discovered 150 such persons teaching in the high schools in January, 1937. The number was 218 in June and 186 in January, 1938. The curriculum has been changed and further changes threatened without adequate study and experimentation. Teachers and principals have been demoted without warning and with no explanation except as the President of the Board of Education, a coal dealer and personal friend of Mayor Kelly, has undertaken to explain educational procedure and the things that constitute inefficiency in teaching or in administration!

As a result, three years of constant reorganization and disorganization coupled with a constantly increasing practice of replacing co-operation with dictatorship, the mutual respect and loyalty so essential to a successful school system have been shattered. Dean Ernest O. Melby of the School of Education of Northwestern University summed up the sentiments of many observing educators when he said: "The fear

of espionage and reprisal penetrates the remotest corners and class-rooms of the Chicago System." No intelligent person will deny that the quality of teaching decreases in direct proportion to the decline of teacher morale. For the sake of half a million children, leaders and masses of the next generation, citizens of Chicago are genuinely aroused to action on this one issue, which more than any other the public can understand. Officials responsible for penalizing the schools for their own selfish ambitions and the sins of society in allowing them to become officials must be replaced by those with some sense of responsibility for what a philosopher-legislator, T. V. Smith, terms "the dearest decency of democracy."

May Mary McDowell's spirit abide and carry on in this conflict!

CHAPTER IX

MARY MCDOWELL AND THE COURTS OPERATING WITHIN CHICAGO

By

Grace E. Benjamin

Division of Social Work, Northwestern University



when the University of Chicago Settlement first opened its doors, Chicago, like any other essentially pioneer community, had but a skeletal system of courts; their socialization had barely begun. Frontier justice, however, which was the most that the state and the local community furnished, came far from meeting the essential human needs of the rapidly industrializing city. Between intricate urban problems involving the lives of men, women, and children, on the one hand, and, on the other, the rough and ready

instrumentation of the law, the gap was enormous. It is the purpose of this chapter to point out the contribution which Mary McDowell made in that vast program of social reform by which, before her death in 1936, much of that gap was closed; and to sketch, in brief form, some of the work in that direction which remains to be done.

The system of courts in operation in this community in 1894 provided a scattered line of justice. City courts performed marriages, settled civil disputes involving small claims, duly tried and punished persons accused of misdemeanors, and dismissed or bound over to the grand jury any cases which appeared to involve felonies. The living of the justices was obtained largely from fees. They were locally elected. Court housing was atrocious; most of the time the crowded police stations furnished the only formal court rooms. In civil suits, court costs ran high; the decentralized system was productive of delay; it scarcely paid the poor man to file his claim--the costs, in the end, ate up his award. In criminal cases the situation was unspeakable. There were, of course, at that date no social services to ease the judicial shoe where it pinched; yet into that shoe were crammed, along with adult men, most of the children seven years of age or older who had been accused of violations of the law;* and all those many thousands of women and girls annually arrested on charges of misdemeanors, usually those relating to the notorious traffic in women and girls; and that piteous procession of "domestic relations" cases, including hundreds of situations in which it was sought to establish, by anomalous action, half criminal and half civil, the paternity of a child born out of wedlock for whom there was needed a court order for support.

*In 1898 alone there were nearly 2,000 Chicago boys and girls not yet 16 years old who were sentenced by the lower courts to serve terms in the Bridewell--Chicago's municipal prison for misdemeanants. See the symposium in *The Child, the Clinic, and the Court*, The New Republic, New York, 1929.

In 1894 the Probate Court had no social services to aid it, in however complicated cases, to make its difficult decisions aright. The County, Circuit, and Superior Courts, on their guardianship side, had, to be sure, a beginning pattern. There was jurisdiction over certain dependent and neglected children, and even over some children who later became known as "delinquents"; but this jurisdiction extended only to children who might be committed to a limited number of private institutions, publicly subsidized--the Manual Training and Industrial Schools set up under the Acts of 1879 and 1883. There was jurisdiction, too, over children of parents suing for divorce; over children brought in by way of the writ of habeas corpus, where custody was at stake; over children given in adoption; and, under a then new statute of 1893, over insane persons. Such beginnings of a guardianship pattern were, however, in the light of modern knowledge, fragmentary indeed. There was no inclusion of the feeble-minded, the epileptic, and (though then the very diagnosis was unknown) the post-encephalitic; the scheme for guardianship over dependent and neglected children and those later known as "delinquents" omitted any plan for the care of those many thousands who, not requiring institutional care, nevertheless needed and could profit by court guardianship. Further, nowhere were there public social services to implement the purely judicial services of the courts. Some private agencies* did, to be sure, undertake the work of discovery, social study and diagnosis, and court presentation; but by far the larger group of those in need of the help of the courts was not covered by this plan, and, even where a group was covered, the plan itself was, in the light of modern experience, woefully meagre: it did not, for example, include public detention facilities (the often filthy jails generally sufficed), nor such modern indispensable instruments for social study and treatment as the child guidance clinic, nor any of the necessary many varieties of facilities for the long-time care of the courts' charges--foster-home care with an available boarding fund to pay for it, many institutional units with varying programs, the services within the ward's own home or the home of his relative, which enable him safely to stay within its familiar confines under court guardianship.

Of course, within that field where, even today, the poorest social plans persist--the criminal law in relation to felonies--the facilities of 1894, as seen in retrospect, were extremely bare. The county jail was a chronic scandal. There was no formal system of public defense. No psychiatric services were anywhere available to help determine that all-important question of legal fact (which, even at that date, nevertheless had to be determined)--is the defendant able to distinguish between right and wrong? There were no social services in those tragic cases where small children were victims of and became prosecuting witnesses against adults who were accused on incest or of rape. Only the bare criminal law system existed: the police, for arrests; the lower courts for arraignment; the lock-ups and jails for detention; the grand jury for indictment; the criminal court for trial and sentence; and the penitentiary system for punishment. Probation and the suspended sentence had not yet

*The Illinois Humane Society, for example, and the Manual Training and Industrial Schools.

reached Illinois, nor had parole; and, of course, a plan for scientific classification within the prison system was but presaged by the only classification then feasible--the assignment of child felons to Geneva (if girls) or to Pontiac (if boys), and of women felons to the Women's Building at Joliet. As to the rest, there was no separate provision even for the criminally insane.

This was the court system operative in Chicago when, in 1894, Mary McDowell began her courageous career back of the yards.

When, four decades later, she lay down to rest, she left a city whose court system presented something like a comprehensive system of judicial services. The Municipal Court, established under constitutional mandate in 1905, and now housed in a handsome building of its own, with judges paid adequate salaries, had at least the power to act as the poor man's court in minor civil suits; the Woman's Court, the Boys' Court (for minor misdemeanants over juvenile court age), and the Court of Domestic Relations had wrested away from local police magistrates their incoherent scheme of judicial treatment by local precincts; and, finally, skilled services, including a psychopathic laboratory, were available and were operating consistently, for the most part, on the basis of a voluntary merit system. In connection with the Probate Court there had appeared the office of Public Guardian. The County, Circuit, and Superior Courts had enlarged their guardianship jurisdictions to include the care of the feeble-minded (1915), the epileptic (1913), and the post-encephalitic (1931). To all of them there was available (but on a minute scale) the professional services of social workers selected on a merit basis and working under the auspices of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare through its Court Service Division.

In one central organ--a branch of the Circuit Court known as the Juvenile Court--there were now gathered the dependent and neglected, many of the feeble-minded, epileptic, and post-encephalitic, and, with some significant and lamentable exceptions, the so-called "delinquent" children. Here were nearly one hundred and fifty child welfare workers, again chosen by a voluntary merit plan, known by a statutory misnomer as probation officers. Every child who came before that court now had the services of study and diagnosis, court presentation by a child welfare worker, and treatment according to a wide variety of available facilities. Where detention was necessary, the court might choose between the use of a foster home and the use of an institution.

In the Criminal Court four kinds of collateral services had appeared. A Criminal Court Branch of the Court Service Division of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare was, although undermanned, equipped to study, in a limited number of cases of women and boy felons, the social situations which, upon a finding of guilty, might be of help in the determination of sentence. A Public Defender was available to represent all persons unable to obtain counsel of their own. A purely diagnostic psychiatric service, quixotically known as the Behavior Clinic, had been established to furnish for the state expert evidence of the capacity of the defendant to commit crime. Within the office of the State's

Attorney there were available the services of two psychiatrically trained social workers who were assigned to do social studies in the cases of so-called "sex crimes."

During those four decades of Mary McDowell's civic live the gap between human needs and the judicial services which ought to meet them slowly but surely had lessened. Two questions present themselves at this point: first, in what ways did Mary McDowell contribute to that change? and second, what further obvious gaps has she left for us to close?

Mary McDowell's genius did not concentrate itself primarily upon the problem of judicial services. In what is generally accepted as her official biography* you will find, among all her good works listed there, only one reference** to a specific effort on behalf of the thousands who annually benefit or suffer from the proceedings of the courts of Chicago. You will search in vain for such material in the numerous press reports of the "Angel of the Yards" and the "Duchess of Bubbly Creek." She did not write of court problems in her papers for State or National Conferences of Social Work.*** To be sure, the Annals of the Chicago Woman's Club, the minutes of the Women's City Club, records of the League of Women Voters, and the reports of members of the old Juvenile Court Committee**** all attest to her deep interest in the development of the judicial functions; and those who watched, fearfully and yet in hope, the campaign of Mr. Joseph L. Gill for Clerk of the Municipal Court, knew the tower of her strength when the battle was won for social services, under his direction, on a merit basis in the Municipal Court. Again, certain fundamental public services not amounting to guardianship are of great importance, on the preventive side, in making the resort to courts less needful. It is, therefore, of some consequence that Mary McDowell was an inventive and vigilant proponent of vocational guidance, of measures to prevent undue child labor, of vacation schools placing emphasis upon manual training, and, in quite another vein, of maternal and infant hygiene under public auspices.

Yet it was not in the few, although significant, services which she rendered to the cause itself that we must look for Mary McDowell's chief contribution to judicial services in Chicago.

Only those who have worked long and faithfully on behalf of those services can fully understand that contribution. An

*Howard E. Wilson, Mary McDowell, Neighbor, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1928.

**Her interest in the detention home for women offenders. See

***See, for example, her seven papers before the National Conference of Social Work, Proceedings, 1896, pp. 123 and 253; 1907, p. 319; 1909, p. 150; 1917, p. 458; 1926, p. 379; and 1930, p. 478.

****Which, having successfully served three juvenile court judges, resolved itself into a private agency, the Juvenile Protective Association.

attempt to state it is of necessity hesitant. Perhaps it can best be put this way: functional changes in government (such as are involved in socialization of the courts) arise out of and subsist upon public approval--that is, upon broad developments in public education and civic insight; and in the very cornerstone of that civic foundation the name of Mary McDowell is justly preserved. It was she who, as much as any one other, was responsible, in the midst of economic anarchy, not only for the growth, in Chicago, of the Women's Trade Union League, but also for much stimulation to the social-civic leadership of the labor unions of the city. The forces of regression can withstand the pressure of a few separate units of public opinion: they cannot long withstand the pressure of an integrated labor movement, and Mary McDowell, from the time of the 1904 Yards Strike until the day of her death, furnished no little of that integration. Almost equally effective was her leadership of the women's club groups.

Even more potent, as a collateral contribution, however, was the kinesthetic effect of the neighborhood settlement. At Gross Avenue (now named McDowell Avenue), as at the other great settlement houses of the day, it was not so much the actual services offered to the neighbors which so profoundly affected public opinion and moulded public policy within the courts and without them. The services were, indeed, basic. But what gave life in Chicago significance, and the sense that here growth toward a civilized economy could take root within the very soil which nourished an economic jungle, was the therapeutic experience of living, if not actually, then vicariously, with such a Woman-Ahead-of-Her-Day. Mary McDowell contributed richly within the settlement where, for most of four decades, she focused the attention of all her fellow citizens upon the plight of her own neighbors, whom only an effective civic conscience could aid. It was out of that enriched social conscience that there sprang, quite naturally, the better court services which our day can boast.

The task is far from complete. Indeed, in many ways it seems scarcely to have been begun. In an increasingly complex economy the judicial facilities require continuous expansion and refinement. The poor man's court cannot relieve the poor man when, as now, inadequate judicial time is assigned to it. The social services in the Women's Court merit vast expansion. Although the goal of having a public defender there has now been achieved, there is still a lack of those decent detention facilities which Mary McDowell fought for when she was Commissioner of Public Welfare. In the Women's Court, the Boys' Court, and the Court of Domestic Relations the social services are still bound down within the framework of the criminal law; and until a proper official civil service status can be secured for these skilled workers, their tenure and promotion on a merit basis are wholly dependent upon the continuing public spirit of Joseph L. Gill.

The Probate Court is in no wise equipped to safeguard its wards as it would wish to safeguard them. In a single recent year,* under a statutory protection not at all dissimi-

*1934. See Hasseltine Byrd Taylor, The Law of Guardian and Ward, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1936. Dr.

lar to our own, a corps of only one hundred social workers recovered, in connection with small estates only, out of funds fraudulently expended by authorized guardians of the probate courts, the sum of \$350,000.

In cases of adoptions Illinois lacks three elementary forms of protection. Consent to adoption should be signed only in the presence of a guardianship court. There should be a one year waiting period between the time a petition is filed and the time the decree is signed; and services should be available during that period. There should be a mandatory requirement of a report of a social study of the child, his family, and the petitioner, prior to the entrance of a final decree. At present none of these three provisions has been enacted into Illinois' law, and her children are subject to all the ills inherent in a situation which fundamentally fosters baby-snatching and indiscriminate adoptions by denying protection to the small numbers of adoptable babies against the great multitude of varied parents who seek babies to adopt.

The Court Service Division of the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare has but a tiny staff, whose members receive but stipendiary salaries, out of all proportion small compared to the magnitude of their responsibilities. As yet there is no statutory requirement that a social study be made and reported in every case where a minor's estate is up for probate, where there is a dispute as to custody of a minor child of divorced parents, or where someone petitions for a child's custody, using the writ of habeas corpus. Nor is there such a mandatory provision for social study in cases of insanity or of feeble-mindedness, epilepsy, or post-encephalitis. Thus, if a patient goes to a Psychopathic Hospital for observation, he has, prior to his hearing, the advantage of social study by the Hospital's small staff (not yet as secure by law as it is by kindly custom) against the corrosion of political patronage appointments. Again, if the patient is a child and happens to come to the attention of the Juvenile Court, he will receive the benefit of social study. If, however, the tides of chance send him to court by any other route, he lacks such services, and the judge, although he must act, does so without the special knowledge which only such a social study can give him.

Nor is the guardianship pattern itself complete. By a recent decision of the Illinois Supreme Court (in the case of Susie Lattimore), the criminal law courts of the county have sucked back from the comparative good of the guardianship system jurisdiction over all children accused of crime if the child be even so much as ten years of age. Only by the grace of the State's Attorney can the Juvenile Court now assure that child the decent parental care which he requires. If the State's Attorney will--and in at least 54 cases in 1936 he did--he may, instead, subject the child to all the trauma, or all the glory and romance, of a criminal court trial and to the well-proved futility of punishment under the criminal law.*

Taylor cites these figures from published reports by the U. S. Veteran's Service.

*It would appear that only a statute raising the age of criminal responsibility from 10 to 18 years of age will mend this primary flaw in the guardianship pattern.

Wherein the Juvenile Court does have guardianship over children, its facilities are woefully inadequate. Although the U. S. Children's Bureau, after careful study, has estimated that no court child welfare worker (Probation Officer) can properly carry responsibility for more than fifty children at any one time, the Cook County workers seldom have less than one hundred families at a time! The children, of course, are the ones to suffer. The workers in the Illinois juvenile court systems, further, have no statutory civil service status: the voluntary merit system which obtains here also depends upon the wisdom and courage of the Honorable Frank H. Bicek, who, like his predecessors in the Cook County Juvenile Court, has rigidly adhered, at great political loss, to the letter of the unwritten merit service law.

Perhaps as important as the problem of court personnel is the problem of court facilities. They are paltry compared with the need. Child guidance clinics are heavily loaded: it requires three months to secure an examination for a ward not in detention; and the number requiring examination at the Detention Home is so great that the one psychiatrist assigned there by the Institute for Juvenile Research is able to spare, for each child, not more than twenty minutes! And this for problems requiring the greatest delicacy in approach and finesse in technique!

Very recently the Detention Home has acquired a trained staff of social workers to control its intake. The victory is, however, fragile, depending wholly upon the order of the fifteen members of the Board of Cook County Commissioners, one of whose number, Mrs. Elizabeth Conkey, urgently pressed the need for this service, long recognized by the civic groups.*

With any new Board will come renewed uncertainties. A similar inquietude hovers over those who desire to see the superintendency of the Detention Home maintained upon a basis of merit selection; a breath could blow it away. For the essential fact remains that the Detention Home of Cook County operates, not under the Juvenile Court, where a 1911 Act sought to place it, nor yet under the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare, where logic, economy, and efficiency would lodge it; but, instead, operates under the fifteen county commissioners acting en masse.

Annual appropriations for the short-time scrutiny and long-time care of the Juvenile Court's wards, although in the course of decades their trend has been upward, have never even remotely equalled the needs.

If we turn to the felons and their unmet needs within the county's court system, we find that the surface of that problem has scarcely been scratched. As a matter of fact, it is questionable whether a soundly conceived scheme for public defense will soon supplant the ill-conceived plan which at present rushes defendants at a fearful rate through a slenderly staffed office. It is doubtful, further, whether the best of psychiatrists and social workers can accomplish, within the framework of the criminal law, more than a

*The Cook County League of Women Voters, for example, first put this item on their program for support in 1930.

mild mitigation of its evils. Something must yet be done to safeguard against undue political pressure the personnel in the Diagnostic Depot. Somewhat may yet be accomplished by a strictly selected probation and parole staff grounded in the merit system, supposing, of course, that it will be recognized, at length, that a merit plan ought to be applied to the top, as well as to the bottom, of the parole administration. Much could be accomplished if there were to be carried into effect two recommendations recently released to the governor by his commission on prison administration. The first recommendation proposes an in-training service calculated to develop efficiency on the part of the guards themselves. The second recommendation looks toward the inauguration, on a slight scale, of a tremendously significant program of psychoanalytic treatment for a few selected prisoners in whom, as a demonstration, it might be possible to discover and to eradicate what Dr. William Healey and Dr. Franz Alexander have taught us to regard as the "Roots of Crime."

One of Mary McDowell's favorite quotations was that the isolated philanthropy of one generation becomes the organized social work of the next. A third step would be the development of the "organized social work" of our time, now largely remedial, into a program of prevention, not merely of cure, assumed as the recognized public obligation of coming generations.

Such an advance in social concepts--long hoped for by Mary McDowell--would, moreover, furnish the best field for the future work of the courts in cases involving social welfare.

CHAPTER X

THE POLICE AND THE SETTLEMENTS

By

Victor S. Yarros
Chicago Journalist and Lecturer



ARY MCDOWELL, as head of a social settlement and a steadfast, vigorous champion of justice, could not avoid unpleasant contacts with the Chicago Police Department. That department has not, in the last several decades, been worse than the police departments of other metropolitan and cosmopolitan cities; but, on the other hand, it has certainly not been much better, except temporarily under certain upright and progressive mayors--William E. Dever, for example.

Social workers, it scarcely needs saying, are opposed to graft and corruption in government as they are opposed to waste, inefficiency, spoils and favoritism. But police corruption, venality and lawlessness inevitably result in more serious social and other consequences than, let us say, corruption in the Department of Public Works. The active social worker is sure to encounter these grave consequences and to be outraged and shocked by them.

The social settlement endeavors to prevent juvenile delinquency and truancy. It tries to protect the civil liberties of its neighbors, especially its alien and underprivileged neighbors. It seeks to interpret American ideals and principles to immigrants and to the children of immigrants. In these and other fields of its normal activity it unhappily finds hostility in certain police circles. It finds, for example, unclean, disreputable and law-breaking saloons operating under police protection. It knows of pool rooms and gambling establishments that could not operate a day without such protection. The same is true of houses of prostitution. The police officers are responsible for the existence and prosperity of these centres of vice and crime and are, as a rule, well paid for their blindness and acquiescence. In not a few instances there are actual alliances between cliques of police officers and professional gangsters.

The social settlement cannot be indifferent to such flagrant and demoralizing situations as these. It is bound to use its influence, legal and moral, in efforts to clean up its sphere of activity and make it fit and decent. Naturally, the corrupt and criminal members of the police force come to regard the social workers as their enemies, as obnoxious busy-bodies and meddlers. The same corrupt and criminal members of the police force, or the ignorant and prejudiced officers who have not received even elementary instruction in their legal rights and duties, complain bitterly of the aid rendered by the social settlement to victims of anti-red crusades, arbitrary arrests, attacks upon legitimate meetings or demonstrations. Social workers who demand respect for free speech and free assembly are dubbed "Anarchists" or "Communists" by the police officers, who have good reason to

fear them. Serious clashes occur as the result of open and vigorous championship of constitutional rights and civil liberties by the settlement workers, and even the daily press is not always impartial or sincere in dealing with such deplorable conflicts.

Chicago has had more than its share of wild and hysterical campaigns against "reds" or "radicals." Leading social workers like Jane Addams and Mary McDowell could not be silent or neutral during such campaigns. They repeatedly raised their voices in emphatic protest against injustice, oppression, "third degree" brutality and the hounding of aliens accused of subversive propaganda. Miss McDowell, for instance, took deep interest in what was known some three decades ago as the "Piperizing" of the Chicago police force. The term seems to have gone out of circulation.

The Chicago City Club, desirous of forcing an improvement in the morale and work of the police department, employed a New York detective, Captain Piper, to watch our police in action and report his observations. He hired a number of assistants and brought them to Chicago. None of them was known here, and they were all men of character and integrity.

They investigated, not graft and corruption, but methods and habits of police patrolmen. After weeks of quiet and effective work, Captain Piper turned in his report and the club published it. The newspapers, naturally, reproduced liberal excerpts from it. The result was a sensation! The mayor and the aldermen, as well as the head of the police force, were startled and scarcely knew what to say. Upon recovering from their surprise, they promised remedial action.

The facts reported by Piper admitted of no challenge. Details were given in every instance, but not the names of the offenders. Loafing, sitting in saloons, cabarets, pool-rooms, drinking with the regular customers, neglect of duty --these were the charges. Gross inefficiency was established beyond a doubt. Measures to improve morale and discipline were adopted and the service rendered by the City Club to the community was widely recognized.

Captain Piper's task was relatively easy. To convict high police officers of graft and corrupt alliances with law breakers and vice lords was a much more difficult task. It is true that one State's Attorney succeeded in convicting a Chicago chief of detectives of graft or blackmail, and the jury sent the man to the penitentiary. But that was an exceptional case. As a rule, the public does not expect the blackmailing and grafting officials to land in the penitentiary, for the latter take care to insure silence on the part of their criminal allies--or victims.

However, at one time, decades ago, a very fortunate conjuncture of favorable circumstances enabled the decent elements of Chicago to clean up the higher clique of police grafters. The Civil Service Commission of the city had as its chairman a man trained in journalism, not in petty politics, and genuinely interested in civic reform. His name was Elton Lower. His work as a star reporter on the Evening Post had brought him into close contacts with public spirited citizens and with experienced and practical reformers. He knew, as did

every other intelligent Chicagoan, that the city was "wide open"; that gamblers, procurers and other vice-lords were operating without the slightest fear of police interference; and that, in all human probability, they paid generously for police connivance and protection. What Lower determined to do was to repeat the Piper experiment. Accordingly, he induced some of the authorities to lend him a few reliable and honest detectives, and these he instructed to ascertain the names and addresses of the more notorious and prosperous gamblers and procurers. This was an easy thing to do. With such evidence in his possession, Lower and his fellow-commissioners summoned the police inspectors and captains of the districts in which vice flourished for examination and cross-examination. He presented them with this dilemma: "In view of the facts we have gathered, you are either indolent, inefficient and incompetent, and therefore merit demotion or even dismissal from the service; or else you have willfully and corruptly tolerated the vice resorts in your districts, and deserve even severer punishment." With the horns of this dilemma leveled at them, the confused and demoralized police officials naturally preferred to plead ignorance and innocence--in other words, incompetence and negligence. The commission thereupon tried them and dismissed some of them, while demoting others. The community and the press applauded alike the ingenious methods of the commission and the outcome of its novel procedure.

The dismissed officials turned to the courts, hoping that legalism and technicalities would win over common sense and boldness, but they failed. The Supreme Court sustained the action of the Chicago Civil Service Commission.

Why the same strategy has not been adopted from time to time by other commissions is a question we cannot discuss here. Mr. Lower retired from public life after a change in the municipal administration and his interesting, courageous and adroit contribution to the story of the police maladministration has only occasionally been recalled and commented upon in the press or among the old-timers in the civic reform administration.

It should be borne in mind that Chicago, in the words of Carter H. Harrison, one of the best mayors the western metropolis ever had, is "a council-governed city." Thanks to the Municipal Voters' League, the City Council of Chicago has been freed from the domination of a band of "Grey Wolves"--rapacious bribe-takers and extortionists--as well as small-bore spoilsmen and dispensers of favors, great and petty. The fifty aldermen who respectively represent the fifty wards of the city are, for the most part, reputable and tolerably conscientious public servants, though politically-minded. The mayors, too, since the defeat and eclipse of the erratic William Hale Thompson, have been industrious, capable and fairly progressive. But the police force remains in politics despite the improvements in council and mayors, and there seems no hope of improvement in the police until the antiquated and complicated mayor-council type of municipal government is replaced by a suitable form of the Council-Manager kind of government. In most of the cities having this form of government, according to weighty testimony, the police department is independent and free to do its duty.

Mary McDowell, like Jane Addams, understood this perfectly well and sympathized with the movement to simplify and modernize the municipal government of Chicago. She believed that the police department should be wholly independent of partisan or spoils politics, and directed by a trained, capable person interested solely in the intelligent enforcement of all enforceable laws. Mary McDowell knew average human nature too well to expect the systematic enforcement of laws or ordinances actually repugnant to public opinion or to the customs and habits of large groups of reputable citizens. But she knew that commercialized vice could be abolished and brothels could be closed and kept closed.

In her particular sphere of immediate influence, fortunately, there was no commercialized vice and no popular support of prostitution. Her neighbors were hard-working, solid, respectable people. But, as a citizen, club-woman and social worker, she was keenly interested in the morals, welfare and health of the city as a whole, and she of course knew that commercialized vice and professional gambling flourished in certain parts of the city because of purchased police protection. She knew, too, that protected vice was always active in politics and a major source of corruption and fraud in primaries and elections.

She fought all these evils, and no movement for clean, capable and efficient government in city, county and state lacked her sympathy and support. Her interest in aliens and newly-naturalized citizens never narrowed her vision or the scope of her civic and political activities.

If Chicago is ever to become a better and cleaner city, and if the police department is to be more efficient, more amenable to proper discipline, better organized and better directed, the credit for these improvements will belong largely to the social workers and the active members of the civic organizations--the City Club, the Woman's City Club, the Bureau of Public Efficiency, the Civic Federation and others--which have dedicated themselves to the cause of good government and sound administration of municipal affairs.

This is not the place to undertake an inquiry into initiatives, degrees of effectiveness, or the magnitude of respective contributions by various organizations and institutions to the constructive reform movement. The important point to emphasize here is that whatever improvement Chicago has succeeded in wresting from the corrupt or factional machines, the selfish and reactionary bosses, the protectors of vice and criminal trades, has been due to the team-work of the city's many progressive and social-minded agencies that have for years or decades been aggressive and courageous leaders in the struggle for clean politics and good government.

Miss McDowell and other settlement heads never failed to support and encourage the honest and high-minded members of the Police Department. They had the complete confidence of many humble patrolmen who sincerely wished to do their duty, but who had to obey the orders of faithless, unscrupulous and corrupt superiors or else face the certain prospect of demotion, transfer to "the sticks," or dismissal upon false charges.

28, 1920

Life

Vol. 76. Copyright, 1920, Life Publishing Company No. 1982

Price 15 Cents



JUSTICE CONGRATULATES THE NEW VOTER

CHAPTER XI

ILLINOIS WOMEN IN POLITICS

By

Willa B. Laird

Chairman Women's Division, City Manager Committee

NO ONE understood better than Miss McDowell the part which the right of suffrage plays in human development. She knew, too, that the exercise of this right is as necessary to woman as to man, if she is to develop her individual capacities and thus be able to make her full contribution to democratic government. No democracy can be complete without the genuine participation of all its citizens.

The emergence of women in politics, in Illinois as elsewhere, is unquestionably based upon the work for suffrage which preceded it. In discussing the subject of this chapter, one must first pay tribute to the leaders who carried through the struggle to obtain this tool of citizenship in Illinois.

The first notable suffrage measure to succeed in this state was a small school suffrage bill of 1891, mothered by Frances E. Willard and Miss Helen Hood.

The Supreme Court upheld the Suffrage Law in so far as it referred to offices created by the legislature, not named in the constitution. This decision meant that women as well as men might vote for candidates for such offices.

The opinion had generally prevailed that no extension of suffrage could be secured without an amendment to the Illinois Constitution. For many years the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association kept asking for full suffrage by means of such an amendment. Meanwhile, in the legislative session of 1893, Senator Coon of Waukegan introduced the large suffrage bill, covering all offices not named in the constitution. For twenty years bills for this purpose had always had more supporters than the amendment. Finally, with the help of Senator Hugh Magill, the bill passed both houses and became a law in 1913. This co-called "large" suffrage measure (in contrast to the limited school suffrage law of 1891) extended more suffrage rights to women than were enjoyed in any other state east of the Mississippi.

Among the women who initiated and carried through this fight in early days were Mrs. Myra Bradwell and her husband, Judge Bradwell; Mrs. Catherine Waite and her husband, Judge Waite; Mrs. Katherine Tuley and Judge Tuley. Dr. Julia Holmes Smith spoke for the cause and gave money. Mrs. Coonley Ward, Mrs. Mary H. Wilmarth and Mrs. Joseph T. Bowen were always generous givers. Mrs. Mary E. Holmes and Mrs. Ella S. Stewart were for many years presidents of the state organization without salary.

Nearly fifty years ago a small group from the Chicago Woman's Club determined that an active suffrage organization should be founded in Chicago. The Chicago Political Equity League resulted from their efforts. Celia Parker Woolley, later known as the founder of Douglas Center for the colored people, was the first president of the League. Catherine

Wagh McCulloch, a woman with a brilliant legal mind and an able speaker, did much to gather foundation material and put it before the public in leaflet and pamphlet form.

Other pioneer members of the Chicago organization were: Mrs. Harriet Taylor Treadwell, a dynamic personality, who made the securing of the ballot her first consideration. Dr. Sarah Hackett Stevenson, first woman to be appointed on the State Board of Health and afterwards founder of the Women's Medical College, was always a defender of the faith. Mary Bartelme, for seventeen years Public Guardian, in 1913 the first woman assistant to the judge in the Juvenile Court and in 1924 elected to the Circuit Bench on the Republican ticket, was then made judge of the Juvenile Court.

It was under the presidency of Grace Wilbur Trout that the large measure of woman's suffrage was won in 1913. A great deal of credit must be given to her approach to the legislators which was that of a sincere woman believing that a request so obviously just would be granted.

Mary McDowell early joined the Chicago Political Equality League. My first acquaintance with her was before the right of suffrage had been gained in Illinois. In a talk at the Chicago Woman's Club she was urging the importance of local government to us all individually. "Back o' the Yards" she had come close to the intense human problems that could be solved only with the aid of government. I was reminded of this early speech when I heard her, at a rather recent date at the same club. She told us then that we should acquaint ourselves with the records of men in office long before election day and that candidates' meetings were very useful but not really adequate sources of information as to their qualifications. No one could have been active in civic and welfare problems in Chicago over a period of years without recalling her frequent utterances, admonishing, inspiring and clarifying.

Her appointment as Garbage Commissioner was one of the first results of the granting of limited suffrage in Illinois. It might seem strange that "Mary the Magnificent," as she was sometimes called after her platform appearances, should be asked to head a garbage commission. Her chapter, City Waste, tells how that came about. She had long lived near to Bubble Creek and well knew the deficiencies of the whole sanitary system. She had been encouraged by the Woman's City Club to go abroad to study garbage disposal in other countries and her expenses had been paid by a civic-minded and generous member. She became an authority on that subject, and upon her return carried on a campaign before all kinds of organizations and churches for more modern methods of garbage disposal. Carter Harrison was wise enough, upon the advice of Charles E. Merriam, alderman from the seventh ward, to appoint a garbage commission and to put Mary McDowell on it.

The organization of the Women's City Club marked another step in progress toward the ballot. This club was formed in 1910 by a group who thought they could assist the suffrage movement by making women aware of the close relationship between government and daily life. Several prominent members of the Chicago Political Equality League were also leading

members of the Woman's City Club. A very effective poster, "Madam, who keeps your House?" was widely used.

I shall never forget the great Child Welfare conference and exhibit held in the Coliseum under the auspices of this club. The picture which stands out most clearly is that of Mrs. Wilmarth, its first president, aged, frail, giving freely of her waning strength in telling over and over again to the passing crowds the meaning of the exhibits--portraying bad housing, sweatshops, neglected childhood. Without emphasizing the ballot, this was one of the City Club's effective ways of educating the public--especially women--in civic needs and responsibilities. The inference was soon drawn that votes in the hands of those who cared most about these matters were the best means to accomplish the results desired.

After the granting of Federal Suffrage in 1920, the Illinois Equal Suffrage Association, following the example of the National Suffrage Association, met to dissolve and to consider reorganizing as the Illinois League of Women Voters. Here an interesting situation developed.

Some of the leaders of the Federation of Women's Clubs argued that because of the already existing civic departments of the federated clubs there would be no need of such an organization. This federation had not endorsed the suffrage movement until 1913, just before municipal suffrage was secured in Illinois. Also, some of the strong party women vigorously opposed reorganization into a non-partisan league--they thought women would be shorn of their influence if they so organized.

The majority of the suffragists, however, knew the value of their long political experience and wanted to conserve it, broaden it and carry it on in the interest of good government. When the convention finally determined to organize the League and the time for the election of officers had come, the suffragists, true to their liberal instincts, refused to accept any of the acknowledged party women who had been suggested for the position and chose an independent, Mrs. Henry W. Cheney. Mrs. Cheney was not one of the old guard suffragists, but was a member of the board of directors of the Chicago Political Equality League and of the Seventh Ward Equal Suffrage Association, and had long been a leader in Woodlawn groups, civic and otherwise. At a time when the "Grey Wolves" controlled the City Council, Mrs. Cheney as an independent espoused the cause of the election of Charles E. Merriam to the council and as his campaign manager met with success in a very hard fight. One hundred and forty-three votes decided his election.* Mrs. Cheney did not intend to get into politics; however, without being partisan she had become a strong influence in politics.

During the War the Hyde Park Community Center drew the attention of the country as a model for such institutions.

*Prominent among the women supporting Mr. Merriam in his early campaigns for alderman were Mrs. Lula Schweizer, Chairman of the Seventh Ward Equal Suffrage Association and of the campaign committee, Mrs. Paul Goode, Mrs. Porter Farrell, and Mrs. Minnie Ray.

Mrs. Cheney was its chairman. Her organization technique was truly democratic and could not be improved upon. With such a background of experience she took up the task of building the Illinois League of Women Voters. For her board she gathered the ablest women of the state. Mary McDowell was among the first. Julia Lathrop's retirement from the Children's Bureau at Washington enabled her to accept an invitation to serve on the board. Mrs. Cheney rightly judged ability for service and was painstaking with the least experienced, giving them opportunities for training by placing responsibility upon them.

The early history of the Illinois League of Women Voters contains many interesting and significant incidents too long to be included in a limited volume. Especially important is its first undertaking--a School for Political Education, lasting ten days, with a daily four-hour program devised by experts. Professors, publicists and a few office-holders of good reputation were invited to speak. Everyone accepted gladly and expressed faith in the plan. Nearly two hundred attended the school, and one hundred took the final examinations. A cursory perusal of club calendars before and after this school will convince anyone of its influence.

Mary McDowell's long experience in a foreign neighborhood made her the logical person to head the committee of the Illinois League on International Cooperation to Prevent War. When a group of women approached her in regard to a plan for organizing all-day conferences on international affairs, to be held during the autumn and winter months, she readily gave her support. This school arranged all-day discussions by experts on outstanding current international issues and continued to function from 1924 to 1936. It was one of the first attempts in Chicago to promote that more intensive study of Foreign Affairs which has since become much more general.

I am reminded of a statement made by Julia Lathrop, then president of the Illinois League of Women Voters, on the occasion of a mass meeting shortly after the War, arranged to celebrate the armistice.

"Future historians are likely to hold that the most surprising and prophetic event of our war period was not the war itself.....It was rather the quiet, world-wide enfranchisement of uncounted millions of women in countries differing as much in race, government and tradition as Mexico, Canada and the United States, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia and India. This enfranchisement creates a new world feeling among women, a new world power of unknown strength. It can mark the beginning of a new world peace if we work hard enough for just world politics."

Unquestionably since the World War and the granting of suffrage, women's work is being recognized more and more at its true value. Some few laws also have been improved, such as giving women control over their own property and the custody of their own children.

Two very notable appointments of women to public office were those of Julia Lathrop as first Head of the Children's Bureau

at Washington and of Mary McDowell, first as a member of the Garbage Commission and later as Commissioner of Public Welfare in Chicago. Miss Lathrop was appointed by President Taft and retained by President Wilson. She had been the first woman in Illinois to serve on the State Board of Charities. At that time her service was unique in that she not only visited the institutions under the direction of the Board, she ate and slept within them, that she might know for a certainty their conditions and needs. Miss Lathrop volunteered her services at one time as "county agent"--the first woman to serve in this capacity--a fore-runner of the social worker of today.

Mary McDowell's work as Commissioner of Public Welfare (appointed by Mayor Dever) was not unlike her work at the settlement, but on a much larger scale. Many people came because they were confused and did not know which way to turn. They told many kinds of stories throwing light upon their own lives and upon the work of the city. There were real cases of trouble, blind and mental cases, cases which must be connected with the Bureau of Charities. Some had obsessions and some were really insane. The department published a little study of one of the cases--Abram Bernstein. Letters were received from many places where the man had been.

At first this department had no money for investigations and no assistants. There was great need of a municipal lodging house, but no money to provide one until in very bitter weather Miss McDowell asked Mayor Dever if he could not open one as an emergency measure. He did so at once and paid for it out of his contingent fund.

She had just learned how to use her office and the city administration had just learned how to use her when Mayor Dever's term of office expired. Her office had made studies of 75,000 homeless men, 50,000 beggars, psychopathic cases and handicapped. But before practical use could be made of these studies, a mayor of the opposing party was elected and none of her work was continued.

Mr. John R. Flynn, writing in Colliers some time ago, said: "Woman has done little with the ballot, as yet, except to civilize the polling places and advance the City Manager form of government."

Women suffragists have never claimed that their efforts would clean up the parties or revolutionize politics. They have only sought the right which every American claims--the right of self-government and of participation in public affairs. Very shortly, I think, we shall realize that women have brought about a renaissance in local government. The intelligent support women are giving to the City Manager plan of government shows their understanding of immediate needs in this direction. They will prove very wise if they continue to place their emphasis on local affairs.

If Mary McDowell were here now in Chicago she would be wholeheartedly in favor of the city manager movement. In summer of 1935 she said: "I have for a long time felt sure that the only way to get out from under the party bosses is to have the City Manager form of government, with a council elected by proportional representation. It has been adopted

in 468 cities, I am told, and has failed to succeed in only 17, those not using the right plan. The University Settlement had 1,700 members in its various clubs and classes. If our more mature settlement clubs could see a clear exposition of the plan they could understand it.

The need of a simple, understandable form of municipal government is being recognized more and more. The City Manager Plan offers a practical solution of the common problem and it may be the one issue upon which men and women can unite to get out of civic chaos. The savings in taxes to business men and home owners under an improved and efficient administration would be considerable. A properly planned program for public recreation would reduce delinquency, the conditions for the under-privileged would be much more favorable, and the morale of our citizenship would be appreciably raised.

In the Saturday Evening Post of December 8, 1936, David Lawrence said: "I look for great strides in our American cities in the next decade. They are much more units of thought than are our far-flung states. If the American democracy is to be a success, city governments must be re-constructed from the bottom up." Murray Seasongood says in his book, Local Government in the United States (Harvard University Press, 1934), p. 75: "...bad local government correspondingly reacts in national elections against the interest of the party. Tammany Hall is not good for the Democratic Party and the Maschke, Vare and Thompson organizations do not help the Republican Party.....Although these predatory bands are termed "local," they are not so in reality, and their baneful influence, like the ripple of slag dropped in water, spreads over the whole surface of our national politics."

Mr. Flynn may be right that women have done little with their ballot except to civilize the polling places and advance the City Manager Plan. However, the organization of the Children's Bureau by Miss Lathrop, and many other undertakings I cannot take space to mention, indicate that women are helping to shape the political ideals much more profoundly. Ballot victories are usually the result of short-time planning, too often achieved by appeal to the prejudices of the electorate. The program of the National League of Women Voters and other groups of women is far-reaching. They attempt to lay the foundation for a better understanding of civic and governmental problems through education. More important even than the immediate result of voting is the fundamental understanding which makes us able to speak the right word at the right time. The word does become flesh and dwells among us.

In time of civil war the word became flesh in Lincoln; in time of social stress it became flesh in Jane Addams, who saw as the object of democracy that "The blessings which we associate with a life of refinement and intelligence can be made universal and must be made universal if they are to be permanent." In Mary McDowell, whom Jane Addams called a woman after her own heart, the word became flesh and dwelt back of the stock yards--an interpreter of democracy, a good neighbor and friend to the helpless and the underprivileged. In the words of her "Young Citizen's Creed:

"Chicago does not ask us to die for her welfare; she asks us to live for her good, and so to live and so to act that her government may be pure, her officers honest and every home within her boundaries be a fit place to grow the best men and women who shall rule over her."

We like to feel that this is the philosophy of all the women who are now emerging into politics.

On February 11, 1938, the Daily News editorial said:

"It (the League of Women Voters) plays the game of high politics, ignoring partisanship and personal prejudices. It has enough victories to its credit to prove that the game can be won.

"The national organization has just announced the issues that will be made its main objectives for the next two years. In the field of state legislation it puts in the forefront advocacy of the manager plan in municipal government. It stresses again permanent registration and the short ballot. Prominence also is given to the importance of providing in state school systems units of taxation and administration that are large enough to ensure adequate support for economically and capably managed schools. Among national issues the first place is retained by the merit system, which was made a major aim of the league two years ago.

"These are all questions fundamental to the integrity and efficiency of popular government....Women may have stepped out of the home when they entered politics, but those of the league took their housekeeping common sense along with them."

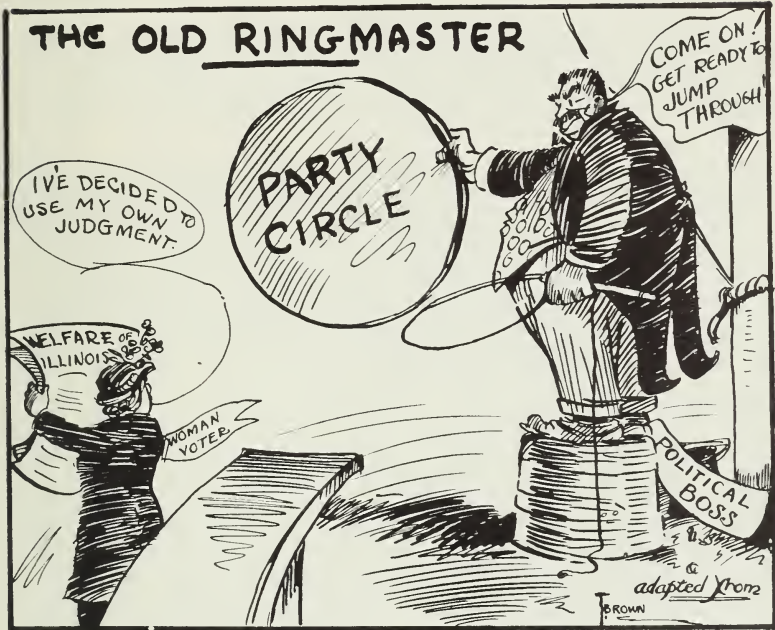
CHAPTER XII

AFTER FORTY YEARS

By

Janet L. Ramsey

Vice-President, National League of Women Voters



FIRST IMPRESSIONS of personalities and events are sometimes etched on one's memory with cameo-like clearness which the passing years do not dim. Such was the case with the writer's first glimpse of Mary McDowell. A newcomer to Chicago, utterly ignorant of its social, economic and political history and problems, I sat spellbound as I heard her, in 1921, address a group of newly enfranchised women.

In my mind's eye I see her, a majestic figure, with eyes that shone with the fervor of a Crusader or twinkled with humor, as she painted a graphic picture of conditions "Back of the Yards." She compared working conditions and living conditions in that area with those which obtained in more favored localities. She spoke of the eagerness of many immigrants to become citizens of the United States; of their exploitation by unscrupulous politicians who oftentimes were the only ones who took a seeming interest in them. She pleaded with the new women voters before her to take an interest in these other new citizens and to offer them a helping hand in solving their many problems of adjustment in a strange land.

She closed with an admonition, which in the light of recent studies of the relationship between crime and poor living

conditions, bears the stamp of prophecy. "In every city I know of," she said, "there are places segregated for unpleasant things. It is the ignorance and indifference of the average citizen and city official that permits this injustice to go on until a slum condition is established. Flies and germs cannot be segregated. The microbe of criminal tendency is as easily developed in this segregated area as is the dangerous fly or the menacing germ. Democracy demands that living conditions shall be upbuilding, fit to grow young boys and girls who will make her future secure. This is so important that the municipalities may have to provide houses that will insure sunshine, fresh air and space which means privacy to all the children of all the people."

How significant and prophetic was this utterance! Nearing completion at the present time, in two areas where living and housing conditions have long been a disgrace to a city which boasts of the unrivaled beauty of its lake-front, are two great housing projects undertaken by the Federal Government. Although no physical monument is necessary to commemorate the names of Jane Addams and Julia Lathrop, these projects in brick and stone are symbolic of the lofty ideals which were built into countless thousands of human lives by the two women whose names they bear.

Because Miss McDowell was a practical idealist, with a record of achievement behind her, she indicated ways in which women might use their new political power. She expressed her conviction that one became a good citizen just as one became good at any other occupation or avocation--by working hard at it. "I suppose all of us hold an ideal, a dream of democracy," she said. "To some of us it is an attitude of mind; to some it is a real religious faith. And yet how few of us want to bring it to pass by doing the commonplace things that will build it up. If democracy is to survive, we shall have to do them."

Have women done them?

It must be admitted at the outset that the voting records show that many women, as well as many men, utterly ignore the responsibility which citizenship in this great democracy entails. This indifference and inertia make the task of the active, interested citizen, who wishes to have government function efficiently and economically, much more arduous, and it plays directly into the hands of the other type of active, interested citizen, who wishes to have government operated in a manner to serve his own selfish ends and purposes, regardless of the public welfare.

If "a task well begun is a task half done," it must be evident that many groups of women made an earnest endeavor to fit themselves for their new responsibility. They frankly admitted their ignorance of the structure and administration of government and set themselves to the task of studying these involved subjects. The programs presented by women's groups everywhere contained subjects pertaining to civics or government. In many states women organized and attended Schools of Politics and gave themselves seriously to a study of local, state, and national governmental problems. They not only disconcerted but dismayed many old line political

leaders by their insistence upon hearing both sides of partisan, controversial questions. In short, women ran true to form by carrying into their political world the attribute for which they have so often been criticised, a natural curiosity. The political parties, each a little uncertain of the value of women in politics but fearful to neglect them, set about their great work of organizing the women voters.

Many women preferred to add to the information provided by the political parties and their candidates for office and organized themselves into a group whose sole purpose was the education of women for intelligent participation in government. Thus the National League of Women Voters was born. Women who were experts in certain fields were chosen to head the various committees. Miss McDowell was made chairman of the Committee on Women in Industry. The Illinois League of Women Voters was organized shortly thereafter. Early in 1921, the Illinois League held a very notable Institute of Politics, in which many women enrolled as students and agreed to submit to examination on certain topics. The faculty of that Institute consisted of interested men and women noted for their knowledge of public affairs. The two most conspicuous courses were conducted by Charles E. Merriam, Chairman of the Department of Political Science, University of Chicago, and Victor Yarros, an outstanding journalist.

It is not surprising that even slight familiarity with governmental affairs left women at first bewildered by the complexity of the problems confronting them and the multitude of evils clamoring for attention. The fears which had been expressed by many opponents of suffrage for women that once suffrage was granted women would rush from home and fireside in great hordes to engage in public affairs and become candidates for public office proved ill-founded. Illinois, which has long held an enviable place for the leadership displayed by women within her borders, has been singularly backward in the number of women who have sought public office.

In our General Assembly the number of women members compared to the number in many other states has been so small as to be almost negligible; no important state office has yet been held by a woman; only two women from Illinois have been sent to the Congress of the United States; several women have sat as members of county boards, but no woman has as yet been elected to serve as an alderman in the Council of the City of Chicago. Women have been appointed to a number of important public positions such as commissioner of the Chicago Department of Public Welfare, superintendent of the Cook County Bureau of Social Service, Collector of Internal Revenue, commissioner on the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners, member of the Chicago Board of Education, and Superintendent of the Federal Narcotic Bureau for this district. One woman has sat as a Judge of the Juvenile Court and recently a woman has been elected as a County Judge, and many have held minor political offices.

Instead of deserting the family hearth, women gave their first attention to the needs of the family, appealing to the government for help in carrying their age-long responsibilities

ties. They literally laid the baby on the door-step of Congress and said: "You must do something to stop the appalling loss of life among mothers and babies. We have facts and figures to show the toll which ignorance and neglect exact. You can appropriate funds through which information necessary to the preservation of the health of mothers and babies may be disseminated and we beg you to do something about it."

Congress did do something, in spite of storms of protest about the invasion of the sanctity of the home, paternalism, etc. In the eyes of many women, Congress looked after the baby just about as half-heartedly and grudgingly as father sometimes "minds the baby" at home.

Far more important, however, than the money appropriated by Congress to be used by the various states in promoting information on infant and maternal hygiene was the arousing of public interest, the wide-spread use of the public clinics, and the realization on the part of the public that there was nothing of greater value than the conservation of human lives. Illinois never consented to accept funds from the Federal Government for this purpose, but the pattern set and the results achieved in states which did accept funds eventually resulted in larger state appropriations, and increased service in this field. The falling death rate attests to the value of this public service and the wisdom of appropriating public funds for maternal and infant hygiene is no longer questioned in enlightened communities.

Encouraged by the success of their efforts in lowering the infant and maternal death rates, women next attacked another evil which had long existed. They were haunted by the figures showing the number of babies who became blind because of the carelessness or neglect of the attending physician or midwife. A measure known as the "Blind Baby" bill, which prescribed certain treatment of the eyes at birth, was introduced into the Legislature. Although it was met by a storm of opposition and went down to defeat in one session, the women behind the measure strengthened their forces, aroused public opinion and secured the passage of the bill. The advantages of having a baby "well born" began to be evident to the community.

Having disposed of the baby, temporarily at least, children in general came in for a large share of attention. We hear much talk about man's inalienable rights. Surely children have some such rights. Certainly in a civilized society children should be well born, well bred, and well read. Government plays an important part in achieving these ends, and the women of Illinois have been alert to secure these rights to children.

That children should be well bred--that is, be reared where they have decent housing conditions and opportunities for recreation--has been of great concern to women. To many, government should have no concern or responsibility for conditions arising within individual families--the solution of the difficulties should be left to relatives, friends and neighbors, or perchance to the church. Others believe that all these agencies have a place, but that over and above them government has a distinct responsibility to safeguard

the health and welfare of those too weak and inexperienced to secure these primary necessities for themselves.

Perhaps no amendment to the Constitution of the United States has been more earnestly supported or more bitterly opposed than has the Child Labor Amendment. It probably would have been relegated to oblivion were it not for the continuing interest of women's organizations. In the estimation of the writer, women will continue to demand legislation to prevent the exploitation of children who labor, if not through amendment to the Constitution, then through Congressional action which will accomplish the same purpose as the amendment.

In Illinois, women have supported legislation prohibiting the employment of children in hazardous occupations or at night. In the last session of the General Assembly a measure backed by many women's organizations was enacted into law. It was designed to protect children. It has been the practice of some manufacturers to carry on their business by giving out work to be done in the home. Study of the situation showed that home work was sometimes engaged in by persons having tuberculosis and other communicable diseases, and that the children of the family, often the very young ones, worked long hours under unsanitary conditions to complete work for which, as a rule, a very meagre sum was paid. Under the provisions of the bill passed, the Department of Labor has the right to inspect the premises where industrial home work is being done and also to require certificates to be issued to all such home workers, who must be free from infectious disease and not under sixteen years of age.

In such a great metropolitan center as the City of Chicago, with its varied industries and keen competition, it is natural for employers to engage labor at as cheap a rate of wage as is possible. Many industrialists here and elsewhere have become convinced of the value of the short working day and have discovered that output is not decreased by shorter hours but frequently increased because of the greater efficiency and alertness of the worker. Perhaps there has been no measure more patiently and persistently fought for than the eight-hour law for women workers. For twenty long years it has appeared before sessions of the General Assembly, sometimes passed in one House only to go down to defeat in the other, several times lost by a very narrow margin of votes. Now, however, the long siege is over, and the eight-hour day is a law. To the Women's Trade Union League belongs the credit for this legislation. It has led the forces supporting the measure and has refused to be discouraged or disheartened.

Closely related to the interest in the hours which women may work is the desire that they should be paid a fair wage for their services. Because women are a new and minority group in our industrial and economic life, and because they are not strongly enough organized to obtain concessions by the process of collective bargaining, the passage of minimum wage legislation is of social interest. Up to the present time, three industries have been brought within the scope of the 1933 Minimum Wage Act in Illinois: the macaroni, spaghetti and noodle industry, laundries, and beauty parlors. It is expected that other industries will soon conform to the

provisions of the Act; garment workers are coming under on May 1.

A realization that problems concerning women and children industrial workers often differ materially from those connected with men and boys in similar occupations is apparent in the provisions of a bill which has just been passed by the General Assembly. It provides for the creation within the State Department of Labor of a position known as Superintendent of Women and Children's Employment.

The seamy and unpleasant side of life has not been neglected by women voters, much as they naturally shrink from such contacts. They have been vigilant observers of the administration of the Juvenile Court and the Juvenile Detention Home, and have never failed to rally to the support of measures which would assure humane and sympathetic treatment to the children who come under the jurisdiction of these agencies.

The outstanding activity of organized women's groups in regard to penal institutions, however, has been centered around the Woman's Reformatory at Dwight, Illinois. Formerly, the treatment accorded to women prisoners in this state was a scandal; then a few courageous women began the fight to alter this condition. It took years to secure funds from the state to erect a modern reformatory and untiring vigilance and devotion to secure competent personnel to administer it. That the efforts of the women were not in vain is attested by the fact that the institution for which they labored so long ranks at the very head of the state penal institutions, both in equipment and in administration.

That education is the keystone of the democratic system is a truism; that women, after seeing that the baby was well born and well bred, should be interested in seeing that it is well read--well educated--is axiomatic. The Constitution of the State of Illinois makes it a state responsibility to provide a good education for all the children of the state. Organization after organization of women have united to demand enforcement of compulsory school attendance laws, adequate appropriations for education, and proper certification in cases where children leave school before the age of sixteen in order to go to work. The Parent-Teachers' Associations throughout the state demonstrate that thousands of women in all walks of life can and do work together for the betterment of the educational opportunities available to children and to adults. Yet despite these advances, the great number of one-room schools and the twelve thousand odd school districts remain as a challenge to the women of the state who wish to provide equal educational opportunities to all the children.

Thus far I have referred only to the activity of women in the field of public welfare, where their interests naturally lie. In order to achieve the ends desired in this field, or elsewhere, women realized that they must first of all familiarize themselves with the new tool with which they had to work--the ballot. Election laws came under close scrutiny and the feminine urge to "clean house" was at once apparent. Men had become discouraged after many attempts to prevent fraud in elections in the City of Chicago, but took new

heart when the women joined forces with them to fight this evil which was striking at the very roots of democratic government. In spite of instance after instance of proved fraud following every election, measures to prevent such practices made little headway in the Legislature. Much remains to be done before Illinois has an honest and efficient election system, but at least one great step forward has been taken in the installation of the system of permanent registration now in use in all the cities in the state which operate under the provisions of the City Election Act and in all municipalities in the County of Cook.

Sponsored by the Illinois League of Women Voters, which was convinced that such a system, if properly administered, would greatly reduce fraud, save the taxpayer money and prove much more convenient to the voter, the permanent registration bill attracted little attention when first introduced among hundreds of other bills. Day by day, however, its advocates increased and its opponents, having no valid arguments to present in opposition, were forced to use time-worn political tricks to accomplish its defeat. The press of the City of Chicago united in exposing the tactics of the opposition; dramatic in the extreme were the scenes in the General Assembly during the fight for its passage; it became one of the major issues in a gubernatorial campaign, and finally was enacted into law at a special session held in June, 1936. No new election law ever received a more grilling test than did the new system of registration in the first election in which it was used--the Presidential Election of November, 1936; but it proved equal to the test and has since been acclaimed even by its former opponents. The work of the Chicago Board of Election Commissioners in installing the system in Chicago is particularly noteworthy. Their task was made especially difficult by the unusual activity of political groups and the short time they had to install the system, but they proved equal to the task.

There is every reason to hope that permanent registration is an entering wedge in the adoption of a more efficient election system in Illinois. Many women's organizations are familiar with the shortcomings of the system now in use, and are ready to work for a shorter ballot, preferably of the office group or Massachusetts type; they are aware of the weaknesses in the system whereby petitions are validated or rejected. In short, women are informed and alert regarding the whole process of elections and are ready to do their part in bringing about improvement. The next logical step in that direction is to permit the use of voting machines in any municipality where the voters by a referendum signified their desire to use them.

I cannot conclude these paragraphs on the election activities of women without stating that since the suffrage amendment was passed, candidates for public office have had to adopt new techniques in order to capture the feminine vote. Women inaugurated a new type of political meeting when they requested all the candidates for a specified office to appear together on the same platform and to state their attitude on political issues.

More and more women are becoming interested in the question of municipal housekeeping. They desire order as well as

cleanliness and hence are studying modern methods of administration of city affairs. They are weighing the advantages of the city manager form of government over the mayor-council form; they are scanning appropriations; they are delving into the mysteries of budgets; they are, in short, inspecting the premises of city government from attic to cellar. They are doing the common place things which citizens must do if democracy is to survive.

Women have learned the value of organized effort, as is evidenced by the number of joint committees through which they have united to attain their goals. They have learned how to work together and how to work with men in matters affecting the public welfare. The legislative programs of such organizations as the General Federation of Women's Clubs, the Association of Business and Professional Women's Clubs, and the numerous church groups is indicative of the lively interest which a great proportion of women have in the affairs of their government.

The American woman has travelled a long and hard road to attain the eminence she has reached today. Door after door of opportunity has been opened to her within the last century. One by one she has been granted rights and privileges until she has emerged from the economic and political status of a child to that of full citizenship. Only one political discrimination against her remains in Illinois--she is as yet not eligible to serve as a juror, but that disability cannot much longer endure. She has been too active in the affairs of government to please those who hoped she would be inert and indifferent or worse--directed by men who had long considered the field of government as their special province. She has not been active enough to please those who expected her, by some magic touch, to cure the political ills of the nation quickly and painlessly. She has made mistakes and will continue to do so; she has accomplished much and will accomplish more. Whatever the future holds, she has become a part of the body politic and will play her part in weaving the pattern of democracy. She treasures democracy so highly that in her interest to preserve it she is aware that she must turn her attention to foreign affairs and to the "danger spots" in world organization which are a threat to democracy.

In all these fields of endeavor, both at home and abroad, Mary McDowell played a large part during her forty years of leadership. She addressed many audiences on the subject of municipal housekeeping; she was foremost in the agitation for better working conditions for women and children, and for better housing conditions for the underprivileged. Her cosmopolitan contacts enabled her to see the world as a whole and to realize the need of organizing and uniting the lovers of peace in all countries to combat the inhumanity of war. As Chairman of the Committee on International Co-operation to Prevent War of the Illinois League of Women Voters, she lent her influence toward removing the barriers which led to international misunderstandings. Mary McDowell had a creed for citizens which she believed; she had a doctrine which she preached; she spent her life in a field in which she practiced daily the role of the "Good Neighbor"--she was a great citizen.

EPILOGUE

PART I

AS WE KNEW HER IN THE STOCK YARDS

By

Harold H. Swift

Chairman, University of Chicago Board of Trustees
Vice-Chairman, Swift and Company, Union Stock Yards



STOCK YARDS 1907

WE IN THE Stock Yards owe much to Mary McDowell. Through adversity and antagonism, she fought relentlessly for a new social concept of living. Her life was given in active devotion to a cause which, in the beginning, was little known and less understood.

Let us recall those early days when Miss McDowell, as she expressed it, "came an immigrant from Evanston to the Stock Yards district, places esthetically and culturally as far distant from each other as any two places in the world."

The Chicago of 1894 was a sprawling city. The down-town district was composed of young skyscrapers, creatures of architectural fancy, interspersed with an ill-assortment of the more common, less attractive frame structures. Away from the business district, narrow board walks stretched alongside the more-traveled streets, which were of wood blocks or cobblestone to the point where they might become a dustbed, a sea of mud, or forbidding mire. Even then the pedestrians had become wary--of bicycles, of fast-stepping horses and the horse-car, and most of all, of that demon which sometimes traveled at the break-neck speed of 10 miles an hour--the cable-car!

The Stock Yards district, near the outskirts of the city, has been well described as "like a frontier town--crude, ugly, dirty."* It was unpaved except for Ashland Avenue and Forty-Seventh Street. Within the Yards the pavements, over which large numbers of livestock were driven daily, were mostly of brick, frequently worn and rutty, with plenty of dust, which on rainy days became mud and gave rise to unpleasant odors. In the Yards themselves was a motley group of buildings of all sizes and shapes, frame and brick, hurriedly constructed. Often Mother Earth served as the only floor.

*Howard E. Wilson, Mary McDowell, Neighbor.

Into these buildings each week-day poured thousands of men and women, and some children. The workers were of many nationalities, at that time mostly Irish and German, with small numbers of Poles and Lithuanians, a few Welsh, Scotch, and English, and a sprinkling of Czechs and Slovaks. They worked in the Yards and lived "back of the Yards."

The University of Chicago Settlement "back of the Yards," with Mary McDowell as head resident, opened in 1894, as a co-operating agency of the Department of Sociology, which, incidentally, was the first Department of Sociology in any university.

Ashland Avenue was perhaps the wettest spot in Chicago. Flourishing saloons lined the walks to take their tribute from small pay envelopes. There were no libraries, and even the public schools could not give proper attention to all the children. The rows of dwellings, mostly two-story, drab frame houses, had neither trees nor grass about them. Few of the houses had sewer connections, and refuse and garbage disposal facilities were unsatisfactory. In addition, the city's trash and garbage were dumped into the open clay pits just a few blocks to the west. The laborers worked early and late, and the wages for the unskilled were low and frequently insufficient for the immigrant to support his large family. It was this situation--a conglomeration of nationalities "back of the Yards," and their problems--that Mary McDowell was determined to understand and improve.

She fought for a higher standard of living, which she considered essential for the development of a proper Americanism for immigrants. Certainly many of the local group had never had the living conditions she fought for, and it is a fair question whether many of the group ever expected to have them, although of course the urge to come to this country was to better their lot.

Miss McDowell's problem can be better understood if the reader bears in mind the general social and economic conditions which existed at that time. Howard E. Wilson, in his admirable biography of Miss McDowell entitled Mary McDowell, Neighbor, states: "Like other great industries of its era, so rapid had been the growth of the packing plants that there had been no time before the 1890's for refinement within the industry."

And it is true that the difficulties against which Miss McDowell strove so mightily were not peculiar to the Stock Yards, but were a phase of our general economic development. It is unfortunate, but it seems to be history, that social consciousness has always come late in the economic development, not only of the United States but of the world. In the early days of our country's economic history, only scarcity of labor was an argument for improved living conditions, additional labor being thus attracted; but this did not apply to Packingtown, where there was a superabundance of labor constantly augmented by immigrants from the Old World, who found even the conditions here as good as or better than those they had left behind. In that day of robust individualism, the packing companies, concentrated in the rivalry of competition, on development and expansion--meeting demands for growing markets and purchasing and processing the great

supply of livestock on western ranges and farms. It was a struggle for the very existence of the packing companies themselves in this newly developed and fast expanding industry. This development, phenomenal for its speed and virility, was but a reflection of the new era in American life--invention, remarkable application of machines and of man's efforts, and unbelievable expansion.

Into this maelstrom plunged Mary McDowell. She strove to provide for material and mental wants, to build our people into better, loyal citizens and into healthier, happier, wiser men and women. She chose the sincere, sure course of friendship, living with and for her neighbors. She struggled to bring a ray of reality to those fantastic stories of a land that flowed with milk and honey, stories that drew peasants first from the northern and central, and later from the southern countries of Europe. That their hopes would not be entirely lost; that they might get a measure of security and happiness out of chaos; that they and their children might have a decent American living:--to this end Mary McDowell devoted her life.

Miss McDowell came to live in the Stock Yards district in the fall of 1894. I preceded her by nine years, having been born in 1885 at 45th and Emerald Avenue, about half a mile from the main entrance to the Stock Yards. My father was devoted to his business, and my early recollections have to do with the many and varied problems in the packing business, prominent among which was the labor problem. I remember the strike of 1894, but only as a confused jumble in a child's mind, of strife and profound unhappiness. I saw these factors of the situation from the management point of view in our own household, and I saw them from the employees' point of view in the public school, where my friends and playmates were from families whose fathers were employed in the Yards. When I first learned of the demand for shorter hours, I was confused--what was wrong with a 12-hour day? My father and brothers were working that long--why shouldn't all men? I remember, too, the strike of 1904, with more understanding, but less from the personal angle, because I no longer lived in the immediate neighborhood.

Naturally, Miss McDowell's efforts were directed toward better working conditions, more pay, shorter hours, and regular employment. These, of course, were in addition to her charitable and educational work with "back of the Yards" neighbors. It was natural that she champion the worker in his efforts for organization, as a means of accomplishing her and his social objectives. Interesting stories are told of her attending meetings in saloons and neighborhood halls, and later in the University Settlement building, counseling the workers in their struggle for their "rights." Although she was then, as now, known to a great number as the "Angel of the Stock Yards," I can remember some who referred to her as the "She-devil back of the Yards." There were other sobriquets given to her, but all of them really were abbreviated eulogies to her perseverance, ideals, and accomplishments.

This explains why in the very early days many of the packers considered her a meddling busybody, a militant crusader, more visionary than practical. At times she appeared to

them impatient, dogmatic, not comprehending the myriad of practical difficulties which did not permit a more rapid change. These were the moments when she was talking to a company superintendent or political leader. When ministering to the wants of her neighbors, she was most kind, understanding, and helpful.

My first recollection of Miss McDowell was seeing her and hearing an occasional lecture which she gave while I was a student at the University of Chicago, before entering business in 1907, where my first business training had to do with the livestock buying. A few years later I began to study packing-house operations and then had my first insight into working conditions. Miss McDowell told me many years later she began to make headway about this time, and as I got to know the working conditions, I am very sure there was an attitude of willingness to consider the employees' welfare. One of the early important evidences of this was the establishment in 1912 of guaranteed hours, whereby, in the basic 60-hour week, there was a guarantee of 45 hours' pay even though the livestock receipts any particular week provided less working time. The plan did not include the transients and irregular workers, but nevertheless it assured steady income for the great majority of employees, those who by virtue of their length of service and experience were on regular payrolls. This plan has continued without interruption, modified only to accord with the present shorter basic week of 40 hours. There is perhaps no other major industry with so great a variation in production from week to week, and from day to day, because the meat packing operations are dependent upon the uncontrollable factor of varying numbers of live animals which come to market.

During the War, much of Miss McDowell's early planning and ceaseless endeavor came to fruition by the authority of the government. Knowing that packing houses were an indispensable adjunct to winning the war--that our civilian population, our soldiers abroad and the Allied soldiers as well, must be properly fed if they were to be successful--the Secretary of Labor appointed Judge Samuel Alschuler arbiter with power to regulate hours, conditions of labor, and wages in the industry. He ruled with fairness and great wisdom, and had the authority, which Miss McDowell lacked, to accomplish many of the objectives for which she pleaded and fought. Out of this situation, at long last came to both management and labor the realization of the truth which she so valiantly strove to establish--that co-operation based upon mutual understanding can accomplish wonders. From this experience came a new day in the co-operation between the Stock Yards interests, Miss McDowell, and the University of Chicago Settlement. Thereafter, Miss McDowell's work and worth were recognized and more fully appreciated, and her counsel sought.

Events of the last quarter-century have proved the wisdom of the pioneer. Although the millennium has not been reached, great progress has been made in the Yards, "back of the Yards," and in the entire industry. Particularly in the past fifteen years, the hopes of Mary McDowell for a better understanding between management and workers have been realized through definite and workable plans of employee representation. During that time, no major difficulties have oc-

curred. Workers in the large packing plants now have methods of collective bargaining, get vacations with pay, and pensions are no longer a novelty. Wage rates are the highest in history. Working conditions and facilities for employees have been greatly improved, and although fairly modern now, these are constantly being studied for further improvement. Thrift plans have been developed providing for systematic saving and a source of funds for provident and productive purposes. Protection at reasonable rates from economic loss because of illness, accident or death is also available.

Because of her understanding and interest in people of all nationalities and her conviction that America was properly a melting pot where all citizens should achieve true democracy through co-operation based upon mutual responsibility and regard, she was early sought in connection with the race riots of 1919, and was one of the most forceful and effective elements of good during that distressing time.

Problems brought to her and her investigations in the homes touched upon all factors involved in human betterment--immigration, education, housing, child welfare, health and sanitation, politics, and employment. Her carefully developed conclusions derived from her Stock Yards experience established her as an authority on such matters, not only in the Stock Yards district, but in Chicago, the nation, and even foreign countries.

MARY MCDOWELL AS WE KNEW HER IN THE YARDS

PART II

By
Herbert E. Phillips, D.D.S.

IN 1894 there were about forty-five thousand of us living to the south and west of the Stockyards, nearly nine-tenths foreign-born or of foreign-born parentage. English, Irish, Germans, Bohemians, Slavs, Hungarians, Poles, Lithuanians, and a scattering of other nationalities; we had come to the United States seeking our golden economic opportunity in American industry. Jobs were to be had in the packing houses, and we landed back of the Yards. Large families were the rule, and three-, four-, or five-room cottages gave us shelter. Many were buying homes, poorly built, on long-time payment plans. S. E. Gross, a well-known Chicago real estate promoter, was active in the district, and it was after him that the diagonal street on which the Settlement now stands was named. We had no pavements, no sewage system, outside toilets, and the sink drainage emptied into open ditches bordering the sides of the streets. Stagnant, green and odorous in summer, these ditches overflowed in spring floods. Streets were deep in dust in dry weather and deep in mud in wet. Much open land near our homes was rented to the packers for hair fields. Hog hair was spread out until the flesh particles decayed and the hair was cleansed by the wind, rain, and sun. Sickening smells emanating from these fields permeated the air. To the north, the south branch of the Chicago River, called Bubbly Creek, was used by the packers as an open sewer. In some places, through a thick ooze, odorous gasses bubbled their way to the surface, and in other parts a crust formed hard enough to support many heavier than water objects. To the west were gaping quarry pits, acres in extent, where our political overlord sold garbage-dumping privileges. On the east, odors came from fertilizing plants from the immense Stockyards and the great meat-packing houses. No wonder, as a general rule, visitors held their noses and complained of the "Back of the Yards" smell.

Small store keepers gave our neighborhood a sprinkling of middle-class families, but most of our working population was employed in the packing houses. Mothers and children as well as fathers were wage earners. The working day was ten hours, and from fifteen to seventeen cents an hour was the usual wage for common labor. At this rate, one salary in the family was not sufficient to take care of even a minimum budget. Children frequently left school before completing the elementary grade schools to seek employment. Women were largely employed at a low wage in the canning factories. Some took in boarders and increased the family income, but crowded the home. A constant inflow of workers filled the labor market, and these unemployed came every morning and stood around hoping to be taken on. Unions were frowned on by the packers, and only the more highly skilled workers, the butchers, had any form of protective organization. There had been occasional uprisings against depressed wages, long hours, and insecurity.

Recreations were varied. Picnics with their inevitable cattle-dressing contests were popular outings. Prizes were presented to those experts who could kill, skin and dress a steer in the shortest time. Dance halls were well patronized. Our German residents had imported the beer garden and these also provided dance floors. Well patronized saloons lined our business thoroughfares and occupied corners on the side streets. Among these the different nationalities had their favorites. Our population was predominantly of the Catholic faith, but there were a few Protestant churches. Social activities were almost entirely confined within national groups; we were just small editions of our respective mother countries. There was very little intermingling between different nationalities and some friction:--respect did not originate the names "Polacks" and "Hunkies." The better paid workers and those who secured higher wages elsewhere formed a constant movement out of the neighborhood to better homes in the districts further south and west. But, as the lucky residents moved out, new immigrants came to refill the empty houses and join the group at the employment managers' doors of the packing plants.

Politically speaking, our district was literally "run" by a big boss, Tom Carey, who ruled with money in one hand and an organized gang on the other. Our boss openly served the packers. At election time reports from a few chosen precincts would be withheld until it was known how many votes were necessary to elect the "right" ticket, and the withheld precincts would then furnish the number needed. There were a few Socialists in the neighborhood who regularly put up candidates for office and still believed, even in defeat, that the Cooperative Commonwealth was "just around the corner."

The Friendly Neighbor

Into our life of packing-house jobs, garbage dumps, Bubbly Creek, and hair-field smells; picnics and cattle-dressing contests; low wages and the fear and actuality of unemployment pacing us as consistently as shadows, and social activities confined almost entirely to our nationals, came word that a new kind of neighbor was among us, living over the feed store on Ashland Avenue. Among us new arrivals were closely scrutinized. If the newcomer was different in any particular way, he or she became the subject of discussion and in a short while busy tongues informed the whole community. We learned that the new neighbor's home was called the University of Chicago Settlement, and that its financial support came largely from the well-to-do university neighborhood on the east. Shortly after the coming of the new neighbor, word spread that young folks and children were having a good time at her home. A number of friendly persons lived with her and invitations to return were repeated. The first visitors at the Settlement reported enjoyable games, lectures, and social gatherings, at which the neighbor and her friends entertained. Church authorities at first disapproved, but curiosity sent thousands to the Settlement.

Fathers and mothers went there to talk over their troubles. And strange to many of us who had not ventured a friendship outside our own particular circle, the new neighbor welcomed

everyone regardless of religion, nationality or politics. Her wit and humor gave zest to our good times and her sympathetic, kindly manner gave dignity and understanding to our more serious discussions. She was adept at discovering aptitudes and under her guidance and assistance many became members of recreational clubs or educational classes. University professors and other prominent persons were continually called on to speak to us.

It was not only as members of groups that we came to know her; it was also in our individual contacts with her regarding our personal problems. We--all of us--felt when we were with her that each of us was a separate, distinct individual capable of stepping out from where we were into wider and fresher participation in life. She encouraged national groups to come to the Settlement and use it for continuing and perpetuating those arts, skills, crafts, and music that were a part of their cultural heritage. Many lonesome immigrants left the Settlement after these evenings with happy, shining eyes and light hearts. Early in our association with the new neighbor we discovered that she believed that human beings had certain inalienable rights, and one of these was the right of mothers and children to the cooling lake breezes in the summer, when the heat and smells back of the yards were particularly oppressive. Her belief preceded and determined the action that she took in persuading the Board of Directors to buy the "Joy Bus," which not only transported adults, children and families to the lake breezes over east, but was always the busy conveyor of happy human beings out for relaxation and a good time.

One old Irish woman said: "Did I know Mary McDowell? I should say I did; she was a neighbor to me. I used to borrow money from her." She was "neighbor" to us all, and in the variety of roles in which this placed her she unflinchingly maintained her humor, kindness, friendliness, and courage. As the years went by she became an old neighbor, saying goodbye to those who migrated and welcoming the new comers.

The Aggressive Neighbor

Friendly neighbor is not the complete characterization of Miss McDowell. Aggressive and militant describe a large share of her activities in the interests of our community. She resented the surroundings under which the workers were forced to live. The contrast between the living conditions in the east end of Forty-Seventh Street and the west was constantly before her. Children at the east end went to the beach on hot days. Hot days back of the yards meant dusty streets and only dirty ditches to wash in. Our neighbor proposed a public bathhouse. After a great deal of pressure on the local and city politicians, money was appropriated by the City Council and the bath house was built almost directly across the street from the Settlement.

During the '94 depression, western farmers were burning corn, eastern miners were hungry, and back of the yards about 20 per cent of the families were destitute. Worried mothers and fathers swarmed to the Settlement. Relief was not well organized; families went hungry in cold homes. The Bureau of Charities' new office was down town, a long way off. A local office would bring direct contact with the needy.

Accordingly, our neighbor got busy and soon the first district office of the Bureau of Charities was given office room at the Settlement.

Important bills affecting women and children were pending at Springfield, and because of her knowledge of the needs, many friends urged our neighbor to run for the office of State Representative against a saloon keeper and ally of Tom Carey. She accepted the nomination, but fear and resentment amongst the political overlords prompted a vindictive campaign, in which vituperation and innuendo did their work. Her opponent continually referred to her as "Kerosene Mary." At that time the Standard Oil Company was public enemy number one. "Kerosene Mary" carried the implication that our neighbor was a secret agent of the oppressive Standard Oil Company, whose money supported the University and thereby the Settlement. She campaigned merrily and with good humor, but was defeated. The enmity of the politicians was increased. Her fight against the garbage dump and her attitude and action during the Stockyards' Strike of 1904 vividly characterize her vision and unerring techniques in relation to the economic and social problems not only of our neighborhood but of city and nation. The dump was an outrage against the community, and in fighting it she pitted herself against our boss--one of the most powerful political leaders in the city. It was to the financial advantage of this Mr. Tom Carey that the garbage dump remain; and he bitterly fought the individual who tried and eventually did rid the neighborhood of this malodorous indignity. One of her most valuable weapons in this fight was scientific information regarding the problem of garbage disposal, which she gathered from the University and other available resources and which she used as a master strategist. As a result of her study of this problem our neighbor became an expert in the field and maintained an interest in it as long as she lived. Back of the yards we knew what violence in strikes meant when in 1894 the federal troops were called out to suppress the activities of the American Railway Union members in their strike. There were working men killed right in our neighborhood, and feeling ran high. When a Stockyards strike was organized and called by the chief of the butchers' union in 1904, feeling again ran high and the neighborhood wholeheartedly supported the strikers. Miss McDowell, who saw clearly the direct relationship between the wages in the packing houses and the extremely low standard of living in the district, stood wholeheartedly with her neighbors in their struggle. She did more. She came out publicly on the side of the strikers. She was the only outstanding public person in the district to take and maintain this attitude. A preacher in a Stockyards' church supported our brave advocate for a few days, but he left town while she carried on. The low wage scale and long hours were maintained during a period when living costs were steadily increasing. Her public attitude regarding the strike at a time when the cleavage between sympathizers and objectors was deep and cut across many strata of city life, including the university circle, was the acid test of her loyalty. In spite of scathing criticisms and pressures from many sides, she maintained her position to the end and never faltered. This public declaration of opinion gave her status and prestige in labor circles thereafter, but the packers withdrew support from the Settlement. Her statements in regard to labor conditions in the Stockyards continued to be criticized and challenged. Finally,

several years afterward, at her request, the Board of Directors of the Settlement authorized and financed a study* of wages and family budgets in the Stockyards area, which gave factual and undisputed evidence to substantiate her position in the question of the need for higher wages in the Yards. Miss McDowell, although she supported the strike, was not considered either a Socialist or a radical. When Upton Sinclair came to Chicago to gather information to write The Jungle, he visited the Settlement, but it was not from its personnel that he got his revolutionary facts. Miss McDowell opened her doors to her Socialist neighbors for a meeting place. To get a majority of the workers into a political organization and to introduce the Coöperative Commonwealth when victory was won was the aim of the Socialists, and victory seemed close to those dreaming Stockyards workers. They were intolerant of her and her ameliorative efforts and referred to them as a waste of time. Our neighbor dropped in at a few meetings and learned from the discussion how trivial and useless they thought her efforts were. She did not argue, but a little later the Socialist group sponsored an open forum to which, at her suggestion, university men were asked to speak. Professors Starr, Goode, and Small, among others, through lectures on the past in anthropology, physical geography and sociology, gave the members of this group a new perspective on the manner and speed of change in society, and they developed a new respect for and understanding of our neighbor's efforts and attitude.

Every need in the neighborhood found her aggressively planning to meet it. She possessed a dynamic drive for transforming thought into action, and in so doing she called on experts and scientific resources to clarify problems and suggest the various channels through which they could best be attacked. The infant death rate was high, so district nurses and infant welfare experts were brought in. Children and young people had no place for play or recreation. Small parks, playgrounds, and recreation centers were conceived and worked for, and finally realized. Poor people are as a rule helpless when entangled in legal difficulties, so a legal service was organized at the Settlement. Small children were a problem in many crowded homes. A kindergarten was started with an expert kindergarten teacher at the head.

Many alert and capable leaders of men came to our neighborhood, with intentions of exploiting it in either industrial or political enterprise. Our outstanding leader sponsored a motto which called for human happiness and more abundant life. She contributed the best of her great abilities toward the end of alleviating and palliating those social and economic distresses and conflicts so much with us "back of the Yards."

The International Neighbor

In spite of the fact that we all lived within our own little settlement of Germans, or Irish, or Slavs, there were many points at which our daily activities necessarily brought us face to face with the harsh facts and situations in our life

*John C. Kennedy, Wages and Family Budgets in the Union Stockyards District (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1914).

in the new world. The security and comfort of the familiar and understandable in human relationships in our immediate home environment could not be carried over into these school, work, and social contacts, where the jarring differences in appearance, language, and habits served to accentuate our underlying feelings of disruption and frustration. Our essential lack of security fostered within us a defensive and antagonistic attitude toward the world outside and increased the egocentricity of each of our national groups. As homesick and unadjusted individuals in a new world we were attracted to the sympathetic friendly neighbor at the Settlement who listened to the recitals of the heartaches and heroics of our respective homelands. She not only listened, but she asked questions to learn more about our old world customs, traditions, and folk lore. She became so well informed that her own categories of values and appreciations were swelled to include those so important to us. She enjoyed and understood Bohemian art, and had a deep appreciation of the facts and emotions of Irish history. She understood the historical economic and social background of our indifferences and antagonisms toward others in our neighborhood, and with this basic knowledge she was able to interpret each of us to the other and take the first step in healing racial sore spots. With the tools of understanding and interpretation she set out more aggressively to influence and direct our transitions from foreigners to citizens. We were drawn into classes in English citizenship, we were attracted to social gatherings at the Settlement where we met our neighbors of different nationalities, and in the progress of a happy evening together our like interests and problems slowly surmounted and overrode our individual defenses and animosities. Mothers' clubs, women's clubs, girls' clubs, boys' clubs, kindergarten, music classes, brought heterogeneous and often antagonistic nationalities into common activities, where the alchemy of her influence dissolved barriers that had separated them. In conjunction with our march toward American Citizenship and integration into the new world, Miss McDowell assisted us in preserving our old world values to enrich our new life.

Her interest in and understanding of immigrants and their problems brought many statesmen and leaders from other countries to the Settlement for discussion and advice. In these meetings she not only contributed to the knowledge of these foreign visitors regarding the immigrants' problems in America, but she also learned more regarding the affairs and activities of the people in our respective homelands. She became an expert in the problems of immigrants and was decorated by several foreign governments for her services to their nationals in America. Visitors from foreign countries frequently found their way to the Settlement, where they were guests of a gracious citizen of the world whose understanding of world problems was only surpassed by her intuitive spontaneity in exercising the art of friendliness.

A distinguished English statesman, while visiting Chicago for the first time, was being driven around the city. He remarked that while Chicago might have grafting politicians and organized gangs of criminals, the beautiful parks, playgrounds for children, museums, art galleries, nursing services and facilities for infant care were silent tributes to long hours of thinking and planning by public-spirited and

public-minded individuals; and that without these far-sighted leaders civilization would not progress. This English statesman was correct; and Mary McDowell was one of these leaders.



STOCK YARDS 1937

PART III

WHAT THE "ANGEL OF THE STOCKYARDS" MEANT TO THE CITY OUTSIDE THE YARDS

By

Caroline M. Hill, Compiler

SOME THIRTY years ago a university professor who afterwards became a university president was driving home with his wife from a meeting in the old Hull-House gymnasium at which they had heard Prince Kropotkin speak. After the meeting they met a few of the neighbors and residents--an artist, a famous lawyer, a poet, a local politician, and some of the working girls from the Jane Club. On their way home the wife exclaimed to her husband: "I never had such a good time; why did I enjoy it so much more than things at home?" "Because you met real people," he replied sententiously. "I suppose that is real society," she continued, "but aren't our neighbors real people?" "I sometimes wonder," he confessed, then lapsed into silence.

Some of the most distinguished members of the University of Chicago faculty were among the first to give their services to the University Settlement, which was founded in 1894. Among them were Professor J. Laurence Laughlin, chairman of the committee which secured Mary McDowell as head; Professor Frederick Starr, head of the Department of Anthropology and a pathfinder in that subject; Richard Green Moulton and Robert Morss Lovett of the English Department; and George E. Vincent of Sociology.

Among the early residents were Ernest Poole, William Hard, I. K. Friedman, John R. Commons of the Department of Sociology in the University of Wisconsin. All were interested in the human adventure and looking for information to develop their own fields of work. Every resident found his life enlarged by contact with the world "back of the yards."

A generation ago there were many 100% Americans who called the foreign born "the Great Unwashed," "the Scum of Europe," "Sheenies," "Dagoes," "Polaks," etc. Mary McDowell soon told the students on Settlement Sunday that her neighbors had come to this country with the same ideals and aspirations that had brought our ancestors. She reiterated that Lincoln was as much an ideal and pattern to Bohemians and Poles as to native-born Americans. To her the neighbors were the "real people." In an article in the Survey of April, 1924, she said: "No social climber ever desired more earnestly to be accepted by the elite than I wished to be accepted by my neighbors 'back o' the yards.'" Later she said this was not assured until she had stood by them during the Great Strike. By this time most of us know that we are only immigrants of yesterday and the day before, and that to despise the foreigner is not an indication of culture but of provincialism.

Research is the most obvious opportunity offered by a settlement to a university. The first studies of the neighborhood were made by residents:

- I. Girls employed in the Stockyards
- II. Boys employed in the Stockyards
- III. Wages and Family Budgets in the Stockyards.

Later graduate students wrote on "Phases of the Sweating System," "The I.W.W.," "The Persistence of Poverty," "The Boycott as a Means of Social Control," "The Struggle of Labor and Capital in the Stock Yards."

But other opportunities are offered. The young student coming to a great city longs for all possible contacts with the great world--wants to lead a hundred lives in one. Tending door at any settlement opens the eyes to individual problems as well as to the city, state and national conditions under which we live. Every request is an invitation to feel out a method of approach to some social ill.

Richard Watson Gilder called a settlement "The House of the Interpreter." Settlement contacts reveal the cultural contributions which other races bring with them to this country. If the university stands for culture, it must recognize the rich native gifts of other nations.

Mary McDowell was not herself a college woman, but her wide acquaintance and varied interests led her to see possible lines of work for students. A few years ago she said to the writer: "If the settlement becomes so scientific that residents have no time to talk with the neighbors--even the old and the unemployed--where will they get their 'hunches' as to new material for research?"

It has been suggested that a kind of interneship--a year or two in a settlement--may become a necessary part of the education of the professor, the doctor and the minister. The testimony of individuals who have served such an internship is valuable. One who spent some years in teaching English to foreigners in the University of Chicago Settlement says:

"Mary McDowell made me over. She opened to me a new world--the world of the workers. I came into direct contact with the working people who surged into the front hall as soon as the doors were opened. Also it was a liberal education to meet the distinguished guests up in her room after dinner.I went abroad with her on one trip when we visited the sewers of Munich, the model stock yards at Stuttgart, the model housing at Ulm, and saw the horrors of poverty in European cities....Then, Miss McDowell showed me it was possible to do things. I had always held back, thinking I could do nothing but palliate and endure. When she went into civic affairs and international organization, I took courage and spurred myself to better endeavor."

That the settlements have had great influence upon literature cannot be doubted. The novels and poetry of this century are largely social, not individual, in their purpose and content. Many modern novels are really social studies, showing the social and spiritual decadence of their times. Experience in social work has furnished the basis for much of this modern literature. Mary McDowell spoke of the unused material for drama furnished by the life of Michael Donnelly, labor leader during the Great Strike of 1904.

It took some time for her to realize that the disposal of garbage was not only fundamental to the health and welfare of her neighbors but that it was a good place to begin to educate other districts which did not know or care what be-

came of their refuse. For twelve years she worked at making a body of public opinion against the primitive and inadequate methods in use in Chicago. For five years, as head of the Woman's City Club Committee on Garbage she urged the appointment of a commission to study conditions in Chicago and other cities. This commission was not appointed until women got municipal suffrage, but her educational work was felt all over the city.

When Mary McDowell gave the convocation address at the University of Chicago in 1923, she was introduced by Professor George H. Mead in words of which the following are a part:

"A university is a corporation and a corporation is an individual without a soul. It is not altogether an easy undertaking--providing a university with a soul--especially if the university does not realize that it needs a soul. It is frequently simpler to have no soul and to confine one's obligations to the letter of the law. It is possible to substitute a mind for a soul and universities specialize in mind. In such a situation it is not by argument that a soul can make good. It was what Mary McDowell was that gave force, that carried.....This is a means of education that has not entered into the curriculum of our institutions of higher learning. It is a form of learning that Mary McDowell has conferred upon the community of the University of Chicago. She has provided it with a soul."

It is not necessary to try to explain what Mr. Mead meant by a soul, but he seems to refer to the twentieth century conception of the soul and of religion. Forty years ago, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, when the university was founded, many college students looked upon religious faith as "believing something you know ain't so," and upon most religion as hypocrisy. The young were in revolt against the fundamentalism in which they had been brought up. The succeeding generation is at least more inclined to quote from Santayana's sonnet:

"Columbus found a world and had no chart
Save one that faith deciphered in the skies.
To trust the soul's invincible surmise
Was all his science and his only art."

Mary McDowell was a member of the Methodist Church, but in later years did not attend its services. She had the kind of faith described by Whitman:

"Darest thou now, O soul,
Walk out with me toward the unknown region,
Where neither ground is for the feet nor any path
to follow?"

To map out a new field, to find a new method of approach, to bring students into association with original minds and pioneer spirits, to teach the young to follow their own lights and then to dare to fail, as Professor Graham Taylor has said--this is the essence of the university idea, its raison d'etre.

Mary McDowell demonstrated practical religion, the urge to "do something about it," which was with her in childhood, to

put her shoulder to some kind of a wheel, even the wheel of a garbage cart. She often quoted Canon Barnett's remark that we must recognize our own city as the City of God. He said most people seemed to think it the City of Satan, from which they try to escape into a life beyond the grave.

In the city Miss McDowell recognized humanity's opportunity to attain its highest development. She became more and more clear as to what Chicago could do and ought to do. Honest people in office, experts and not politicians, a survey of every ward to find exactly what its conditions are, cleaner streets, the use of school houses as the natural offices for aldermen and centres of community life, above all things better housing to make possible a higher standard of living --these were what she called her dreams for Chicago. She said she did not know who coined the phrase "Municipal Housekeeping," but she knew she had used it many times. At the time of her garbage campaigns she was credited with it.

She was always an ardent supporter of Votes for Women, although she knew it might take fifty years to learn to use suffrage rightly. She said all depended upon learning to think about our city as we do about our own homes. She thought the re-making of Chicago was the greatest challenge to its citizens, together with world organization to get rid of war. One of her sayings about the city was this: "I have been told that one of the tests applied by alienists in hospitals is to put a 'case' in a room with a leaking tap and give him a mop. If he turns off the tap he is sane; if he keeps on mopping he must remain an 'inmate.'"

"Then you think we in Chicago are all fit to be inmates?" queried the listener.

"Yes, to be inmates of just such a city as we have now."

She was pleased to tell of the changes to be seen in the forty years she had lived back of the yards--the houses of brick instead of frame, the sidewalks of concrete instead of boards, the lighting electric and not kerosene, the demands of the people for their own baths, not satisfied with public baths; everyone consuming more milk and less beer. But the changes, said she, are not what they ought to be because the ideals of the people are formed by the ward bosses, who know so well how to get something for nothing. One of the greatest needs of the time, she continued, was to divorce welfare from politics, and the other was to change the question asked by everybody, "What am I going to get out of it?" The ideal of many of the people is the ward boss, because he knows how to get so much money without working for it.

The international atmosphere of the settlement has always been an opportunity for students. "In 1904 President Thomas G. Masaryk, then Professor of Social Philosophy and History at the University of Prague, came to the University of Chicago to lecture under the Crane Foundation on the 'Problems of Small Nations.' He gave a vivid picture of the struggle of his own country for independence. He had the vision of a 'United States of Europe,' as he liked to call it. During his three months' stay he came often to see us....Often his homesickness at his hotel sent him to our playground, where he would sit on the corner sand-box, talking to children in

the Polish, Slovak, Bohemian, German or English languages. The children were so at home with him that they would sit on his knee and put their arms around his neck."

Later in the year, Dr. Alice Masaryk, his eldest daughter, came to the United States for a year, part of which she spent in the settlement, studying methods of nursing and all the health measures in this country. She also studied the Bohemian immigrants, hoping to write a history of Bohemia. She was a resident during the meat-cutters strike. During the War, when her father was in exile, the Austrian government imprisoned her and the wife of Edward Benes, now President of the Republic, in a military prison in Vienna, where they remained for nine months. Charles R. Crane and Julius Rosenwald, with the help of Mary McDowell and Jane Addams and the press of New York and Vienna, brought pressure upon the German Minister, Count Bernsdorf, who at that time wanted to please our country to keep us from going into the War, and the two women were set free without any explanation.

Miss McDowell spent some months of 1922 with the Masaryks at their country estate at Laing, near Prague. On her way home she stopped at Geneva to see if the League of Nations was "A moribund institution." When she returned to Chicago she told us what was really happening at Geneva--how she had seen the delegates of the small nations that had been such bitter enemies (see Chapter III, "Prejudice," p. 1) now sitting at the same table at the League, thinking of the welfare of Europe and of the world, instead of their own ancient hates. She told us what Sir Gilbert Murray had described to her--how for the first time in history two small nations had dared to criticize England and all the delegates had approved of them.

Mary McDowell made in all five trips to Europe, the last in 1928, again to Czecho-Slovakia as the guest of the Chicago Bohemians. At this time she was decorated in Bohemia with the Order of the White Lion, an order given to those who have rendered distinguished services to the state; and in Lithuania she was given the order of St. Gedeminus because she had been a friend of the Lithuanians.

Near the time of her death she believed that, in spite of appearances, an internationalist movement for united sentiment against Fascism and war was growing, and that a new era had begun in which the quarrels of the small nations which had been called the "tinder-boxes of Europe" could be prevented from bursting into the flames of war.

The socializing influence of life in a cosmopolitan neighborhood such as surrounds a settlement is shown by another story told to Miss McDowell by Gilbert Murray, of Oxford University. "It was in the second year of the League of Nations Assembly, when reasoning became almost impossible because of the disorderly wrangling of the small nations, who were bristling with their age-old hatreds and prejudices, that suddenly in the midst of the confusion a young Czech delegate from the Czecho-Slovak Republic arose. He had lived and studied in your city where the many nations with the many languages live together in peace, creating a new kind of civilization. He had shed his old-country prejudices. It was as if a miracle had happened when he spoke.



Quiet and calm came upon the assembly and we were able to reason together."

On Sunday, November 29, 1936, the neighbors and friends of Mary McDowell held a memorial service for her at the University Settlement. The chairman was a young Jewish lawyer who had been coming to the Settlement ever since he was brought in his mother's arms. Heads of Bohemian and Polish societies spoke and their choruses sang. The Mexican spoke fluently, dwelling upon her ability to interpret working people to "people of influence." A colored man, John Green, sang most movingly. All the speeches were brief and some halting, but in all was a genuine

urge to tell what Mary McDowell had meant to them, and their intention to carry on what she had started. They agreed that she was a great soul who had lived her belief in equality and fraternity, who had enlarged their horizons and lifted them to higher things.

There were a few representatives of the city in front of the yards. If they had spoken they would have dwelt most upon the influence of her inter-racial and international spirit, of the way she had led us all from the neighborhood back of the yards to the world's great neighborhood.

A number of the working people of earlier days were present. As we left the memorial service we passed a bent and lonely old woman who dated back to the period of the Great Strike and the formation of the Women's Trade Union League. Her eyes were red and she could only shake hands with us, saying brokenly: "Oh, how I loved that woman!" So we were all saying in our hearts.



ON HER EIGHTIETH BIRTHDAY



UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS-URBANA

309.12H55M

C001

MARY MCDOWELL AND MUNICIPAL HOUSEKEEPING



3 0112 025281640